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The Choral Music of Allen Henry Koepke (1939-2012) with a Conductor's Special Focus on the Preparation of His Seminal Work, *Missa Brevis*

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THE CHORAL MUSIC OF ALLEN HENRY KOEPKE (1939-2012)
WITH A CONDUCTOR'S SPECIAL FOCUS ON THE PREPARATION OF
HIS SEMINAL WORK, *MISSA BREVIS*

by

Keith J. Curington

A Doctoral Document

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THE CHORAL MUSIC OF ALLEN HENRY KOEPKE (1939-2012)
WITH A CONDUCTOR'S SPECIAL FOCUS ON THE PREPARATION OF
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Keith J. Curington, D.M.A.

University of Nebraska, 2012

Adviser: Peter A. Eklund

Although American choirs have been performing Allen Koepke's compositions since 1973 and his music is witnessing greater and greater international appeal, especially in Asia, academic writings about the composer and his contribution to the choral art have been absent. This document examines *Missa Brevis*, the seminal work by Allen Koepke, and serves as a conductor's guide for score study and rehearsal preparation. It will address practical problems unique to the work and will suggest solutions that will ensure excellence in its performance. A biography, a complete catalogue of the composer's large number of choral works in print, a listing of works not published, a chapter that focuses on Allen Koepke's compositional career, a transcript of interviews with the composer, and a score of *Missa Brevis* are included. The purpose of this document is to not only be a resource for conductors regarding Allen Koepke's choral oeuvre, but also guide them as they seek to present successful and informed performances of *Missa Brevis*.

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INTRODUCTION

Allen Koepke was an American choral composer whose work is increasingly performed worldwide. Church, high school, honor and all-state choirs, and even symphonies frequently perform his pieces. Some of his commissions and other works are among the most beloved and programmed choral octavos of the past three decades. In an attempt to offer detailed documentation of Koepke's contribution to the choral art, this document represents a compilation that includes a discussion of his life and compositional career. Chapters that specifically focus on his seminal work, *Missa Brevis*, will be included. In its conclusion, the study attempts to identify Koepke's compositional merit and status and to bring to the fore the qualities in his music that make it worthy of performance.

Two face-to-face interviews and several Skype interviews were conducted to compile the information found in the interviews. Koepke continued to write until his death in September of 2012. The scope of this study includes the composer's compositions from 1973-2012. Koepke's struggle with cancer and subsequent complications from radiation slowed his compositional production. At the time of the publishing of this document, Koepke has one more composition yet to be released from Santa Barbara Publishing. Efforts have been made to identify and list all choral works not yet published by the composer. The footnotes and bibliography in this document conform to, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* by Kate L. Turabian.

CHAPTER 1

BIOGRAPHY

Childhood and Formative Years

Allen Koepke was born in Chicago, Illinois, on April 20, 1939, to middle-class parents, Henry and Dorothy Koepke. His parents started him on piano at the age of seven and he quickly excelled, and became very accomplished pianist. He sang in the church choir at St. Timothy Lutheran located at 2100 N. Kildare Avenue in Chicago. Dorothy, his mother, was the secretary at the church, and also doubled as the children's choir director for some time.¹ It was through singing in this choir that he began to get some indication that his musical abilities were more advanced than other children. Until this point Koepke was oblivious to his talent. He never felt that he was special in any way, but he certainly discovered uniqueness in himself regarding music. He thought that everyone could differentiate between an A and a B-flat on the piano from just hearing it. He also assumed that everyone could read music at sight. His eyes began to open to his abilities while singing in the St. Timothy Lutheran choir, when he stood out because he had what he would come to know as perfect pitch and he could read music while others could not.

Koepke discontinued piano lessons at the age of thirteen to pursue sports. While he liked playing the piano, he was tired of the practicing that it required and wanted to spend time with sports. He was drawn to all types of sports with basketball and wrestling being his

1. Allen Koepke, interview by author, Cedar Rapids, August 2, 2010.

main passions. He was an athletic teenager, and he remained an active tennis player until his death.²

In Chicago, school buildings housed either K-8 students or 9-12 students. There were no middle schools. The opportunity for him to sing in a school choir did not arise until he enrolled at Kelvyn Park High School. However, Koepke did not take this chance to sing in the choir because, according to Koepke, the choir consisted of approximately 150 girls with a scattering of four or five males. He was an athlete and did not feel that going into that particular choir situation would help sustain his reputation. Instead, he decided to join the orchestra. His desire was to play the baritone, but the director talked him, into playing the trombone because there was a greater need for trombone players in the orchestra. His parents paid \$45 for a trombone that year, and he continued to play trombone through his freshman year in college. He never sang in the Kelvyn Park High School choir.³

Koepke did sing in his church choir under the direction of Dan Tkach, who was also the director of choirs at East Leyden High School in Franklin Park, Illinois. Koepke considered Tkach one of the best choir directors with whom he has ever worked. He had an extraordinary high school choral program and Koepke benefited from his expertise at church. Koepke expressed a vast amount of admiration for Tkach and attributes his desire to become a band director to him. His desire began to further increase when he substituted as choir director for Tkach at church when his mentor was absent.⁴

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

Koepke didn't like Kelvyn Park High School in Chicago because gangs and other issues had made the school undesirable. Koepke's family moved to Elmwood Park, Illinois, shortly after his freshman year in high school. He continued however, to attend Kelvyn Park High School until halfway through his junior year. Koepke then opted to finish out his high school education at the newly built Elmwood Park High School. Koepke would sing in choir there under the direction of Bonnie Hansen. It was a brand new school with about 1400 students and he was one of thirteen who had enough credits to be considered an unofficial senior.⁵ Koepke quickly encountered a couple of problems. There was no official senior class at Elmwood Park that year. The school opened with only freshmen, sophomores, and juniors. Because credits were counted and viewed differently in Elmwood Park than they were in Chicago, Koepke and the twelve others had a dilemma. They had accumulated enough credits to graduate with just one more semester as long as they passed the required government test. Elmwood Park not only had no government class, but the administration wanted all thirteen students to consider themselves 1st semester juniors, which would make them all repeat a semester and lose credits that they had already earned. Koepke met with the administration himself and talked them into letting the thirteen students retain their credits, and also negotiated the teaching of the government test outside of the school day.⁶ Teaching a test would be against the rules today, but the test was taught for a couple of weeks and the thirteen students passed. Allen Koepke unceremoniously graduated from high school after a semester at Elmwood Park and enrolled at Luther College. There was no graduation ceremony because the school technically had no graduating senior class that year. Elmwood

5. Allen Koepke, telephone interview by author, September 1, 2012.

6. Koepke. 2012.

Park's first senior class graduated in the spring of 1956. Koepke received an invitation to participate in the ceremony, but since he had already completed a year of college he declined. He received his diploma in the mail the summer after his freshman year at Luther College. His diploma declared that he graduated from Elmwood Park High School with the class of 1956, when in all actuality he had simply finished and left school with enough credits a year earlier.⁷

Undergraduate Studies

Allen Koepke went to Luther College to become a band director. His passion was sparked during his junior year in high school when the Luther College band under the direction of Weston Noble visited Chicago and performed at Lane Technical High School. He attended the concert and was overwhelmed with the sound and technique of the band. He followed his dream and enrolled in classes at Luther College.⁸ Freshmen were not eligible to participate in the top ensembles at Luther College, so he instead played trombone in the Varsity Band, and joined the Chapel Choir that was conducted by Bartlett Butler. It was during his participation with the Chapel Choir that he learned countless teaching strategies and much about conducting, but more than anything he gained a love for choral music during this time. His focus until then had been mostly instrumental, but now he had found passion for choral music that lasted throughout his career.⁹

7. Ibid.

8. Koepke. 2010.

9. Koepke. 2010.

Koepke sang in the Chapel Choir for one year, then auditioned for, and made, the Nordic Choir each of the next three years. His mentor, Weston Noble, is widely known as a choral director, but at that time he was the director of both the Luther Band and the Nordic Choir. He influenced Koepke profoundly. Koepke attributed much of his musical accomplishments to Professor Noble. His career was shaped and directed by Weston Noble through opportunities and personal recommendations that began when Koepke was still a college student.¹⁰

The renowned and monumental collegiate music figure, Weston Noble was periodically away from class directing festivals. Because of Professor Noble's absences, Allen Koepke, an outstanding theory student, was selected to be Professor Noble's Teaching Assistant his sophomore year. His duties included grading theory homework as well as preparing and grading the tests and teaching in Professor Noble's stead occasionally. Weston Noble has never been a good driver and since many festivals were scheduled away from the college, student drivers were enlisted to take him to and from choral festivals. Koepke was chosen as one of two drivers for Professor Noble. After safely transporting his professor to festivals, he watched and learned from one of the great choral masters of our time.¹¹ During his junior and senior years, Koepke was even given the opportunity to conduct at some of these festivals. From time to time Professor Noble asked Koepke to work with a piece or two. Through these opportunities Koepke was able to acquire hands-on learning and immediate feedback from Professor Noble, unique experiences that few can claim.

One of his most memorable opportunities of this type was when, while driving

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid.

Professor Noble to Minneapolis in order to conduct the Minneapolis Symphony, Koepke had jokingly commented that he should be allowed to conduct when they arrived. He assured Professor Noble that he knew what he was doing, even though, it was pointed out, he had not taken a conducting class yet. Later that evening, during rehearsal, Professor Noble arrived at the “Hallelujah Chorus,” turned around and beckoned for Koepke to come to the podium. Weston Noble tossed his baton to the young Koepke, and said, “Okay, Big Shot.” Koepke accepted the challenge, ran up to the podium, took the baton, and at eighteen conducted a professional orchestra for the first time.¹²

Professional Career

Allen Koepke took over the choir at a little country church called Springfield Lutheran during his sophomore year in college. Through his influence at school, he was able to persuade several of his friends from the Nordic Choir to ride with him to sing. This enhanced the seven-member church choir not only in numbers but also in quality. After directing the choir at Springfield Lutheran for two years, he became the choir director at Calmar Lutheran for his remaining year in college. By the time he graduated from Luther College, Koepke already had three years of experience directing choirs.¹³

On Weston Noble’s verbal recommendation, the Clear Lake, Iowa, School District superintendent asked Koepke to interview. The program had an outstanding reputation, and the school was newly built. He accepted the position and greatly expanded the program during his seven-year tenure. When he left in 1967, 350 students were singing in choirs from

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

the 400-member high school, and at the junior high school, 300 were singing in seventh- and eighth-grade choirs out of a 350-member student body.¹⁴ Professor Noble informed Koepke that he had come across a new job for him while Koepke was attending his brother's graduation from Luther College in 1967. Jefferson High School in Cedar Rapids had a vacancy, and Professor Noble wanted to know if he was interested. Weston Noble had already informed the Cedar Rapids School District that the person they wanted was Allen Koepke. Word about Allen Koepke's success at Clear Lake had spread all over the state because all 28 of Koepke's students that had auditioned for the Iowa All-State Chorus that school year had been accepted. No other school in Iowa had as many singers accepted into the All-State Choir. In light of all of the success at Clear Lake, Allen Koepke felt that it was time to move on, and after an interview, a five-hour tour, and discussions with family, he signed a contract and became the director of choirs at Cedar Rapids Jefferson High School.¹⁵

Over the next thirteen years, Allen Koepke managed an outstanding program at Jefferson High School. He expanded and maintained a very demanding, comprehensive choral program that included chamber, concert, and women's choirs, theory, aural skills and three Broadway musicals per year. His concert ensembles were noted for their high quality and collegiate tone. Because of their excellence, Koepke's choirs were invited to perform at festivals such as the Dorian Festival in Decorah, Iowa.

Koepke was also a pioneer of the show choir movement in the Midwest. In his second year at Jefferson (1968-69), he auditioned singers for a new choreographed vocal

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

ensemble. The sixteen-member ensemble named, Westside Delegation, garnered remarkable success because of its innovation and excellence. It was the first of its kind in Iowa.

Community members and school districts around the state were enthusiastic about this type of ensemble and its potential. With Westside Delegation's performance excellence, Koepke set a high standard and had begun a choral mainstay in Iowa that still thrives today.¹⁶

Koepke left Jefferson High School to become the director of choirs at Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids. He was hired to create and build an accredited music program at the institution. A choir existed before Koepke's arrival, but personnel, quality, and standards were low. Koepke began by creating a legitimate choral program. He would be faced with the prodigious challenge of using music facilities that were less than accommodating. Initially, the choral program was housed in former army barracks because the new music facilities, Valentine Auditorium and Cedar Hall, were in the process of being built.¹⁷ By his third year at Kirkwood, the choral program moved into Cedar Hall where they were able to settle in their own rooms and offices. Koepke could then concentrate on the addition of an instrumental department and faculty. Because Valentine Auditorium was still unfinished, the Iowa Hall lunchroom doubled as a concert hall and housed Koepke's first choral concerts. By the end of his tenure, and because of his initiatives, state-of-the-art computer technology flourished in the music department.¹⁸

16. Koepke. 2012.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

Koepke also started a show choir at Kirkwood that would later focus on vocal jazz. After learning more about vocal jazz and attending a Phil Matteson vocal jazz camp, Koepke was convinced that vocal jazz was more appropriate and musically enriching than show choir at the collegiate level. This new ensemble was called Jazz Transit.

Koepke remained at Kirkwood Community College for sixteen years, until he was forced to retire due to complications from pancreatic cancer. He was given only months to live and, chose to undergo aggressive radiation treatments in an attempt to lengthen his life. After the extreme rounds of radiation administered at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester Minnesota, Koepke was deemed cancer-free. While there were few subsequent complications because of the radiation treatments, he remained cancer-free and in fairly good health for fifteen years. It was only recently that his health began to decline again. In 1996, Barbara Harlow, President of Santa Barbara Publishing, wrote to the members of Choral Net:

Allen Koepke, composer of over 40 published choral works, and professor of music at Kirkwood College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa learned earlier this month that he has pancreatic cancer. He is presently hospitalized after having had two surgeries in the past ten days. His prognosis has recently been changed from "a few months to live" to "years." Allen has completed 11 commissioned works in the past three years and was at the height of his career when he learned of this illness.¹⁹

Koepke's remarkable recovery allowed him to travel, and continue in the music profession as a composer, conductor, clinician and director of choral festivals. After Koepke's battle with cancer and subsequent recovery, Weston Noble reflected on Koepke's career in a letter:

19. Barbara Harlow, "Allen Koepke Struck by Pancreatic Cancer," ChoralNet American Choral Directors Association. www.choralnet.org/135945 (accessed September 18, 2012).

Dear Allen:

My favorite driver [from] years ago has just completed his 50th year in church music! I hold the record I believe in being at Luther for 57 years (now my 60th year in teaching). But YOU must come very close to holding the record for dedication in church music! How could one verify that? Put out a challenge in the computer, and you might get some interesting answers.

Allen, you and I collectively speaking have conducted thousands upon thousands of choristers. The Holy Spirit has made certain a seed has been planted within the spirits of each singer. That seed falls upon many different kinds of 'soil'. It is His responsibility to bring it to fruition, sometimes years later. Two people among many have been used to complete the Master Plan – you and I!

Interesting how God did not let you 'go' several years ago. "No, Allen, I have many more who need that seed planted and only YOU can bring this portion into fruition. Thus I have given you more years to till my soil. And may I say, you have been 'good and faithful'."

Thank you, driver, for not only steering the car well, but for composing new cars as well which have reached countless more. In some ways, I am left in the dust!

In Christ's service,

Weston²⁰

Allen Koepke lost his battle with pancreatic cancer and subsequent radiation treatments on September 23, 2012.

A man who lived larger than life is being remembered as a man who demanded excellence and embraced every day as a gift from God. Tributes are pouring in via Facebook, e-mail and phone calls from people eager to share their memories of Allen Koepke, 73, as they work through their shock and sorrow after his death at 5:30 p.m. Sunday (9/23/12) at St. Luke's Hospital in Cedar Rapids. Teachers, students, musicians and members of the faith community are joining in unison to sing the praises of the gifted composer, conductor, educator and friend who beats the odds of pancreatic cancer 16 years ago, but succumbed to internal bleeding — a lingering effect of the "extreme radiation" used to treat his illness all those years ago, daughter Amy Hanisch of Walford said. Family and close friends gathered at his bedside and sang to him in his final moments. "It was so special," said Hanisch, who teaches music at Coolidge Elementary in Cedar Rapids and conducts the children's Discovery Chorus for Orchestra Iowa. "His pastor was there and all of his kids. We just decided we would stand around his bed and sing. And we sang hymns and it was cool, because everybody there was a singer, so it was four-part harmony, and my

20. Weston Noble, Letter to Allen Koepke, Fall 2010.

dad's countenance changed. ... He was there, but not there. ... A peace came over his face, and I thought, 'How fitting, that this is how you would leave, hearing a choir.' It was something I'll never forget."²¹

Awards and Honors

Over the years, Allen Koepke has received numerous awards that celebrate his achievements as conductor, teacher and composer. The most notable awards were received in the mid-1990s while he was still active at Kirkwood Community College. Koepke considered it an honor to be asked to write a composition commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Iowa All-State Music Festival. The piece that he wrote, *In Praise of Music* incorporated the three Iowa All-State ensembles individually, and simultaneously. The forces for the piece consisted of 600 singers and 500 instrumentalists. Weston Noble conducted the piece. This composition and its performance came to fruition at the time when Koepke was very ill and had been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. His remarkable recovery would follow and his life, and career would continue for 16 additional years. Allen Koepke's awards and honors celebrate the expertise, innovation and artistry of a man who gave us outstanding music for the choral stage for decades. One of his biographies states:

In 1996, he was awarded the "Iowa Professor of the Year" by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and Council for Advancement and Support of Education. Also in 1996 he was honored as "Innovator of the Year" by Kirkwood Community College and the national organization "League For Innovation" for his work in computerized classroom instruction. In 1995, he was inducted into the Jefferson High School "Hall of Fame" and in 1994 was awarded the coveted "Honorary Student" by the Kirkwood student body and Executive Council. At the 1997 Iowa Choral Directors Association Summer Symposium, he was awarded

21. Diana Nollen, "Noted Cedar Rapids, composer, conductor dies," *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, September 24, 2012.

the distinguished Robert M. McCowen Memorial Award "for outstanding contribution to choral music in Iowa."²²

22. Allen Koepke, "Allen Koepke," Brooklyn Publishers.
www.brookpub.com/default.aspx?pg=ab&afn=Allen&aln=Koepke (accessed September 18, 2012).

CHAPTER 2

COMPOSITIONAL CAREER

The interest in composition that had begun in high school grew through his years at Luther College. Because he had already taken all of his required and elective music classes by his senior year, Koepke pushed the institution to offer a composition class.

Koepke recalls:

I went to Weston and said, “I’m going into my senior year and I’ve got nothing to do in music... I’d be interested in composition. Why can’t we have a composition class?” He said, “I can’t have a composition class for one person. If you can round up some more people, maybe we can make that an offering.” So I found, I think, four other people who agreed to become a class with me. Maurice Monhardt, who was teaching at Luther at the time, and was a published composer, became our composition teacher.²³

Koepke was very proud of his creativity during that class, even though none of it has ever been published. His study of composition continued during the summer of 1961 at the University of Minnesota, where he learned from the esteemed composer Dominick Argento. Koepke then attended the University of Northern Iowa and graduated in 1967, receiving a Master of Arts with emphasis in composition.²⁴

Allen Koepke began to compose professionally during his tenure at Jefferson High School in Cedar Rapids. In 1972 he wrote a double-choir, a cappella piece in quodlibet for the Jefferson High School choir entitled “Come Ye, Come All Ye People” that he submitted to Schmitt, Hall & McCreary Company who accepted and published it

23. Koepke. 2010.

24. Ibid.

in 1973.²⁵ Nearly a decade passed before Koepke sent another one of his pieces to a publisher. It was at the beginning of his final year at Jefferson, when he was inspired to write what would become one of his most successful pieces. Koepke reflects:

I used to do a retreat, where we'd go out and actually go into the woods and spend a day...we did all sorts of wonderful activities. While the kids were in the woods working on a project, I sat down, I had a Bible in the car and some music paper and I decided that I was going to write something for the choir. So I found some verses that I liked and I started setting them to music. "Praise the Name of God with a Song" is the name of it.²⁶

The piece was well received by choral directors all over the country and has been purchased, programmed, and performed for decades. Koepke gave more insight into the writing of the piece by saying:

I wrote it in about two hours in my car listening to the Iowa/Iowa State football game, which kind of diminishes it a little bit... I remember I was using the steering wheel and a clipboard, and I'm just writing and writing and listening to the game, checking my lyrics, and I wrote the whole thing in two hours. If I have ever done anything that was just, I would say inspirational, I mean the notes were just coming at me. I didn't have a piano, I had nothing and I just wrote it. I got it all done, and I went back home. I think I tweaked it a little bit, not much. I printed it and had my Jefferson choir sing it that year. Then I sent it to Jim Kimmel, who was then at Jensen Music, and Jim loved it.²⁷

The Hal Leonard Corporation included the piece in a volume representing the twenty best SATB pieces of the Twentieth Century. According to Koepke, "Praise the Name of God with a Song" was also programmed by at least one choral ensemble at National ACDA

25. Koepke. 2010.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

conventions for over a dozen years.²⁸ It continues to be an outstanding seller for the Hal Leonard Corporation.

Although he wrote for his own ensembles, Koepke was frequently commissioned to write pieces for various reasons. Typically these commissions were in celebration of an event, or the composition was the centerpiece in the celebration of a milestone performance or achievement. Some requests were very specific, while others left Koepke free to create without any boundaries.

The Text

The majority of Koepke's compositions are sacred; however some of his highest selling compositions however are non-sacred. Among these are, "And Nature Smiled," and "Dance on My Heart." The text is the musical inspiration for all of Koepke's compositions. He began each composition with thorough study of the text. In some cases, he used a pre-existing biblical text. If there was no pre-existing text, Koepke preferred to write the lyric, as he did with "And Nature Smiled," a composition written for treble voices. Koepke explains:

Talk about inspiration, I really was inspired with that text. I don't know where that text came from. Sometimes you get an idea from an experience that you had in real life that you either liked or something that really got to you. I think that with "And Nature Smiled" something really got to me. It has to do partly with discrimination perhaps, where this weed says, "I want to be like a rose." And the rose says, "But you have value, you have value." That's what I tried to say.²⁹

28. Ibid

29. Ibid.

“Dance on My Heart” was the first composition written by Allen Koepke that was published by Santa Barbara Music Publishing. Barbara Harlow, who is the president of the company, received a phone call from Koepke, who asked her if he could read the words to a poem that he had written. Harlow loved the text and its message. Koepke was so excited about composing the piece that he called her three days later and told her that it was in the mail.³⁰ “Dance on My Heart” was the first of many collaborations between Koepke and Santa Barbara Music Publishing. Published in 1992, it has since sold over 175,000 copies.³¹

I think Santa Barbara started up around ‘90 or ‘91. They have only been going for twenty years. I won that contest [The 1991 Iowa Choral Directors’ Association Composition Contest] and they were very excited about the piece. They were very encouraging, so much so that it just became my natural first option to send to Santa Barbara. I’ve had a lot of pieces turned down by Santa Barbara [Music Publishing] because she does not like religious music. She just doesn’t.³²

The text found within the piece “I Listened” was originally called *Spring Poem*. A collaborative effort, the text that inspired the piece was written by his son Scott, who offered the poem as a gift to Koepke for his 60th Birthday.

“Spring Poem” was but one poem as part of a larger collection of thoughts by my son Scott while he lived in Southern California in the early ‘90s. His several poems concerned his observations regarding societal problems and needs and were influenced by certain events, including bitter racial strife in 1993. His “Spring Poem” was presented to me on my 60th Birthday. As I read his words, I was struck by the poignancy and timelessness of his observations, as well as their relevancy. For, you see, my birthday was on April 20, the fateful day of the Columbine High School tragedy. Scott’s words seemed all the more meaningful,

30. Barbara Harlow, telephone interview by author, September 24, 2012.

31. Dance on My Heart, “Allen Koepke,” Santa Barbara Music Publishing. <http://www.sbmp.com/SR2.php?CatalogNumber=34> (Accessed September 24, 2012).

32. Koepke. 2010.

appropriate, and prophetic that day, for they addressed a universal challenge all of us need to consider: if we are ever to learn from the past, we must first learn how to listen.³³

Subsequently, a composition was commissioned by Linn-Mar High School in Marion, Iowa, for a performance at the North Central ACDA Convention in 2000. The poem was so moving to Koepke that he asked his son if he could use it in the new commission. His son granted permission with some reservation because he had given the poetry to his father as a personal gift. Koepke used all of the text that his son had written in this composition, but found that once he got into the middle of the piece, it needed to say more. With his son Scott's permission, Koepke added more text and completed the music to "I Listened." The published text reads:

I listened to the breeze today that cooled and cleaned the air.
 It whispered, "I'll be with Mother Earth and Fire," we care.
 The peace we long for will be found; with faith, we can sustain.
 The seekers can stop searching then; with love, peace will remain.
 To plant and reap and share and know that there is
 never enough goodwill to give,
 never reason to stop love,
 never time to give up.
 If we don't hear the wind, then how will we see?
 If we're blind in our hate, can we hear what will be?
 We can't be lifted up with our face to the ground.
 We can't honor the Earth when we don't look around.
 I listened to the breeze today, the wind of hope and change.
 I heard the laughing children while the cries of freedom rang.³⁴

Koepke composed a non-published solo of "I Listened" that captures all of the words that his son, Scott originally gave to him. A recording of his daughter, Amy Hanisch singing the solo version of the piece was played at his funeral.

33. Allen Koepke, *I Listened*, (Chapel Hill, NC: Hinshaw Music Inc., 2000).

34. Ibid.

I listened to the breeze today that cooled and cleaned the air.
 It whispered, "I'll be with Mother Earth and Fire," we care.
 The greed with which the power hungry think they can sustain,
 We'll not allow to overcome the humble who have made gains.
 To plant and reap and share and know that there is
 never enough goodwill to give,
 never reason to stop love,
 never time to give up
 I listened to the breeze today, the wind of hope and change.
 I heard the laughing children while the cries of freedom rang.³⁵

Koepke's final composition was to be a piece entitled "Dream It!" with two equal double choirs. In June 2012, he communicated with Barbara Harlow about the concept of the piece. He had the lyrics written and had the full concept of the piece, and he explained it to Harlow in an e-mail message. Harlow replied that the lyrics might seem somewhat preachy and urged him to soften them so that they might be more broadly accepted.³⁶

Hi Barbara:

I've attached the lyrics for my new piece, "Dream It!." Let me tell you about how I conceive it unfolding: There will be two equal groups - Group A and Group B - they will be equal in numbers and ability (including range). It is a two-part song: In verse 1, group A will sing a melody, while group B sings a simple, non-intrusive harmony part; The chorus will be sung by the groups singing two rather [simply designed] contrapuntal parts - still have to work that out in my mind; In verse 2, group B will sing a 2nd melody, while group A sings the same simple, non-intrusive harmony part (sung in vs. 1); The chorus will essentially be a repeat of the first time through; Then, the "piece de resistance"—both groups will sing together, in quodlibet, their respective verses—it should be very exciting for the singers to do this, and VERY interesting from an audience standpoint; Finally, there will be a concluding "coda" with a big, inspirational ending. Let me know what you think of the lyric—this is in it's very formative stages—there will most

35. Allen Koepke, *I Listened* (unpublished score presented to Amy Hanisch, Allen Koepke's daughter, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, August 22, 1999).

36. Harlow, interview.

likely be a lot of tweaking once the music is added to the words. I'll work hard on this - don't want to disappoint you. Allen.³⁷

Just as each note is carefully chosen in a musical composition, so too are the words of the lyrics. For a man like Koepke, whose formative years were inspired by the lyricism and poetry of the Bible, switching out syntax in order to convey a watered-down version of his inspiration was a choice he did not take lightly. In an e-mail message to Barbara Harlow, Koepke writes:

Reworking this lyric is not easy—but I've made some changes—not big ones—but perhaps it's a bit less preachy. You know, most of my lyrics probably fall into that category— “And Nature Smiled” – “Speak To The Child Of Love” – “The Miracle” – “Seed Of Hope”—even “Dance On My Heart.” As you are most aware of—through my lyrics I'm trying to balance the onslaught of horrible words that kids are hearing day after day—teachers have told me they appreciate my effort—even the students themselves. I took your suggestions to heart and tried to marry the verses and chorus to the "dream" theme. Is it any better? Any less preachy? You know, when I was a kid, my goal was actually to be a minister—maybe there is something inherent in me that forces the preacher instincts. Anyway, let me know what you think—I'm anxious to begin writing the music - but not until I'm more or less committed to the lyrics.³⁸

Koepke's Compositional Process

Koepke did most all of his compositional work in the mornings. He was an early riser and liked to be up before the sun to feel the cool morning breeze during the spring and summer months. After spending four or five hours writing, he found a breaking point and left the work for another day.

After the text was set, Koepke began to create melodic material. Within an hour the principle melody of the piece usually begins to take shape. The melodic idea was

37. Allen Koepke, e-mail message to Barbara Harlow, Santa Barbara Music Publishing, June 2, 2012.

38. Allen Koepke, e-mail message to Barbara Harlow, June 3, 2012.

generally kept within a 10th.³⁹ The key was then determined based on the tessitura that will be most comfortable for singers. Accompanists were also considered in determining the key. Many accompanists tend to like keys with flats rather than keys with sharps.

Koepke explains:

The first thing is to decide what key is best for the song... for instance A or A-flat and if it doesn't make any difference, then I'll go with a flat. Even as a singer, there is a difference between, let's say F, or F-sharp. F is a note that sopranos can sing with ease, but F-sharp starts becoming problematic. So, that one half step means a lot. However, what about the key of G? Are you going to expect the sopranos to sing a high G? But, what about singing a high A? This is a big difference. So that's part of it, and it depends on how often they sing that note, and how long they hold the note. These are all things that you take into consideration.⁴⁰

The Spiritual

Allen Koepke's output was broad and diverse. He was comfortable writing for male or female voices, sacred and secular. His arrangements of the spiritual, of which Koepke arranged six, have been particularly effective. They are listed chronologically, in Table 1 on page 21.

39. Koepke. 2010.

40. Ibid.

Table 1:

Composition	Published
“Lord, I Wanna Climb, But I Keep Slippin’ Away”	1985
“Kum Bah Ya”	1986
“Wade in de Water”	1998
“Ev’ry Time I Feel the Spirit”	2000
“Zekiel”	2006
“Follow the Drinking Gourd”	2007

Koepke’s arrangement of “Wade in de Water” has had wide appeal, and is his most successful and top-selling spiritual. Koepke understands the unique chord structure and the rhythmic style of the spiritual. Those unfamiliar with his work often mistake him as an African-American composer.

A lot of people think I’m Black. I’m serious. I’ve had people call me that I don’t know and after we’ve talked they ask, “Well, you are Black aren’t you?” I go, “No I’m not,” and they ask, well how can you write Black spirituals the way you do without being Black? I grew up loving spirituals. I just love them. There is something intrinsically exciting about listening to a spiritual. I really understand the spiritual. I get it. So when I write, I’m just writing what I love and what I know.⁴¹

Most performers of “Wade in de Water” are unaware of the life-influences behind the writing of the piece. The compositional process was special, according to Koepke. While he is usually at home with his computer as he writes, this time a computer was unavailable:

41. Ibid.

I wrote that [“Wade in de Water”] in a room in St. Louis. My stepson has got epilepsy, and he was down there having some brain surgery. We are down in the Ronald McDonald House for one month while he was having brain surgery and recovering from that. So we would go to see him, and then there wasn’t anything else to do so, I’d go back to the Ronald McDonald House and I had brought along a little keyboard and a lot of paper. I was down there for a month, and during that month I wrote “Wade in de Water,” In the Ronald McDonald House in St. Louis, Missouri... I didn’t have any [music paper] with me, so I wrote it on napkins. The whole thing was on napkins and regular paper. I would scratch out a staff and I would write some things in. The problem was I had all of these ideas but I didn’t have them in any order. So when I got home to my computer, it was like a puzzle putting all of the parts together that I had already written in St. Louis. That’s how that whole thing unfolded.⁴²

Publishing Houses

Allen Koepke’s music can be found in nine publisher catalogues. These publishers include Schmitt, Hall & McCreary Company, Hal Leonard Corporation, Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation, Good Life Publishing, Kimmel Publications, H.W. Gray Publications, Santa Barbara Publishing, Studio 224, and Hinshaw Music Incorporated. Since the Hal Leonard Corporation publication of “Praise the Name of God with a Song” in 1980, it has been Santa Barbara Music Publishing that has published Koepke’s best selling compositions. With total sales of 325,610 units, Koepke ranks number two among composers within Santa Barbara Music Publishing. According to Santa Barbara Music Publishing records, David Childs ranks number one with a total of 481,958. However, David Childs has 59 titles with Santa Barbara Music Publishing, while Koepke has 20 titles, therefore giving Koepke the strongest overall sales per item.⁴³

42. Ibid.

43. Barbara Harlow, e-mail message to author, September 24, 2012.

CHAPTER 3

MISSA BREVIS, BACKGROUND AND NOTES

Allen Koepke's setting of *Missa Brevis* is a through-composed, Mass, scored for large chorus with soli and orchestral accompaniment. Koepke dedicated *Missa Brevis* to "a great musician and friend, Mr. Charles Matheson."⁴⁴ Matheson, was a college professor, who Koepke admired, who admonished him to teach at the high school level. The Mass ordinary texts are set in their entirety by Koepke and spun into a thirteen-minute composition that, to date, has received rousing audience responses. Koepke achieves compositional brevity through concise musical ideas rather than reducing the amount of text or using the simultaneous text technique. While each movement is separate, the composition is seamless with each movement being connected by simple sustained notes from the orchestra.

Missa Brevis is the composition for which Allen Koepke had the most pride, in fact calling it his crowning achievement.⁴⁵ The idea to write it, came after Dr. Bruce Chamberlain, who was then Director of Choral Activities at the University of Northern Iowa attended a program that featured in its entirety, music of Allen Koepke. It was performed at the 1994 Iowa Choral Director's Summer Symposium in Mason City, Iowa. Struck by Koepke's unique and interesting creative instinct to write musical ideas that embodied the text, Dr. Chamberlain approached Koepke, requesting that he compose a fifteen-minute work for the University of Northern Iowa's performance at Carnegie Hall,

44. Koepke, *Missa Brevis*, 1.

45. Koepke. 2010.

scheduled for the spring of 1996.⁴⁶ A choir of one hundred and forty, representing all of the university choirs, and some alumni, planned to participate in the Carnegie Hall performance. The compositional parameters given Koepke were few. He was told there would be a large choir, and an orchestra containing one trumpet. The orchestra slated to perform with the University of Northern Iowa choirs was the Bohuslav Martinu Philharmonic Orchestra from the Czech Republic. Randall Thompson's *Frostiana*, which only employs a single trumpet, had already been programmed for the same concert. Since there would be only one trumpet player traveling with the orchestra, Dr. Chamberlain requested that Koepke include the solo trumpet part to suit the Bohuslav Martinu Philharmonic's instrumentation.⁴⁷ With these three parameters, Koepke composed *Missa Brevis*, and it premiered at the University of Northern Iowa engagement at Carnegie Hall. At the National American Choral Directors Association Convention in San Diego, Dr. Chamberlain conducted *Missa Brevis* again the following year. For this performance, the University of Northern Iowa Concert Chorale, and university orchestra joined him. According to Dr. Chamberlain, the piece was well received and highly celebrated both at Carnegie Hall and in San Diego.⁴⁸

46. Dr. Bruce Chamberlain, telephone interview by author, October 1, 2012.

47. Ibid.

48. Ibid.

Table 2: List of Known Performances

Date	Location	Conductor
May 14, 1995	Carnegie Hall, New York	Dr. Bruce Chamberlain
Spring 1997	National ACDA Convention, San Diego, CA	Dr. Bruce Chamberlain
May 2, 1998	Cedar Rapids Symphony, Cedar Rapids, IA	Christian Tiemeyer
Unknown	Culver Stockton College, Canton, MO	Unknown

Text

The text used in *Missa Brevis* is certainly, historically speaking, choral music's most familiar set of lyrics. Most of the great composers, through their associations with the church were required to compose music using the traditional text. However, since Koepke's liturgical position did not require this, such a composition was not expected of him, making this published piece unique in his particular oeuvre. It is his most mature composition. Koepke said in the 2010 interview that he loved to listen to *Missa Brevis*, and that when he listened to a recording, it was difficult to believe that he wrote it.⁴⁹

Text Painting

A clear example of text painting appears in the "Credo." The upward leap of a sixth in the unison soprano and tenor solo lines on the word, "resurrexit," points to the physical resurrection of Christ.

49. Koepke. 2010.

Figure 1:

105 *f* (solo) 106 107

Et re-sur-re-xit ter-ti-a Di - e se - cun - dum

Likewise at the end of the “Credo,” Koepke created a sense of hope for things to come in measures, 141-143, as the soprano and tenor lines end in an ascending motive singing “Et vitam venture saeculi” (and the life of the world to come).

Figure 2:

142 143

Et vi-tam ven-tu - ri sae - cu-li.

Further text painting is observed in measures, 119-124. In this passage, Koepke paints a majestic and emphatic choral vehicle for the text, “Credo in Spiritum Sanctum, Dominum, et vivificantem” (I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of life).

Figure 3:

The musical score for four voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) spans measures 120 to 124. The tempo and performance markings are as follows:

- Measure 120:** *rit.* (ritardando)
- Measure 121:** *Triumphantly (non-legato)*
- Measure 122:** *f* (forte)
- Measure 123:** *f* (forte)
- Measure 124:** *f* (forte)

The lyrics for each voice part are:

- Soprano:** Cre-do Et in Spi - ri - tum Sanc - tum, Do - mi - num et vi - vi - fi - can - tem: qui ex Pa - tre Fi - li - o - que Pro - ce - dit.
- Alto:** Cre-do Et in Spi - re - tum Sanc - tum, Do - mi - num et vi - vi - fi - can - tem: qui ex Pa - tre Fi - li - o - que Pro - ce dit.
- Tenor:** Cre-do Et in Spi - re - tum Sanc - tum, Do - mi - num et vi - vi - fi - can - tem: qui ex Pa - tre Fi - li - o - que Pro - ce dit.
- Bass:** Cre-do Et in Spi - re - tum Sanc - tum, Do - mi - num et vi - vi - fi - can - tem: qui ex Pa - tre Fi - li - o - que Pro - ce dit.

Text painting also is evident during the singing of “Hosanna,” in measures, 20-22 the “Sanctus.” These measures represent some of the few measures of choral polyphony in the entire Mass. Koepke sets this word apart for each voice part to lift praise by section to the highest.

Figure 4:

The musical score for four voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) shows measures 20, 21, and 22. The lyrics are "Ho-san-na, Ho-san-na, Ho-san-na, Ho". The score is written in treble and bass staves. The Soprano part starts with a forte (*ff*) dynamic and a melodic line. The Alto part starts with a forte (*ff*) dynamic and a melodic line. The Tenor part starts with a forte (*ff*) dynamic and a melodic line. The Bass part starts with a forte (*ff*) dynamic and a melodic line. The lyrics are "Ho-san-na, Ho-san-na, Ho-san-na, Ho".

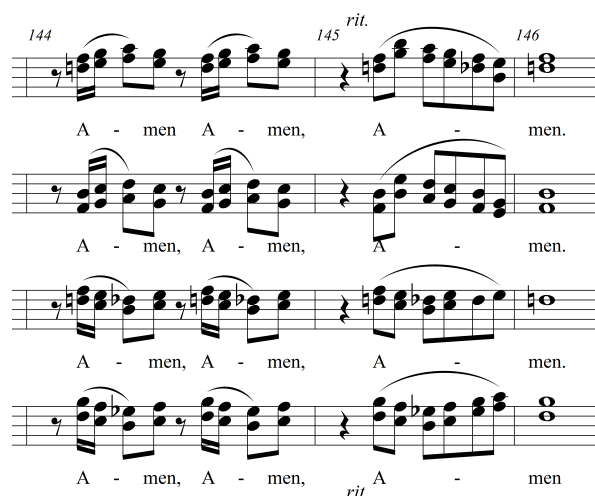
Lastly, all of “Agnus Dei” is set to depict a reflective and peaceful mood. The homophonic three-part women’s textures followed by a men’s version of the same texture, allows the chorus to achieve a full-bodied sound while still acknowledging soft dynamic markings. The final sense of peace is finally achieved in measures, 50-55 of the “Agnus Dei,” as the full chorus sings “Dona nobis pacem,” piano to pianissimo followed by a single pianissimo chime.

Figure 5:

The image displays a musical score for four staves, likely representing different vocal parts. The music is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are 'do - na no - bis pa' and 'cem.' (Amen). The score includes dynamic markings such as *p*, *pp*, and *ppp*, and a *rit.* (ritardando) marking. The first staff starts at measure 50, and the subsequent staves continue the melody. The lyrics are written below the notes, with 'do - na no - bis pa' on the first three staves and 'cem.' on the fourth. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some measures containing rests.

There is something notable about the way Koepke paints the word ‘Amen.’ In both the “Gloria” and “Credo,” the word, ‘Amen,’ which closes each movement, is marked by repeated emphatic statements, which use 16th notes followed by slower rhythms to bring each movement to a close. I thought it was intriguing that Koepke used a similar strategy in both movements for the ‘Amen.’

Figure 6:



Texture

The texture of *Missa Brevis* is varied. Textural contrast is achieved through the use of *a cappella* full chorus, *a cappella* men's chorus, solo voices accompanied by strings, and full orchestra and chorus among other combinations to attain color. The four-part choral texture throughout the Mass is mostly homophonic. There are a few choral passages that are not written in four-part harmony. These other passages pair either women's or men's voices together. The only deviation from this practice is in measures 105-108, in which, a duet is created between the tenor and soprano soloists.

The majority of the orchestration is designed to create diversity in color via individual sections and their timbres. It appears that Koepke's only attempt to disseminate a motivic idea occurs during the first and second movements. The "Christe," motivic idea is passed from the chorus to the oboes and later to the flutes in the "Gloria."

Movement and Modulation in 3rds

Allen Koepke had an affinity in his writing to modulate and move in 3rds. Not unlike many of his other compositions, this technique appears repeatedly in *Missa Brevis*. In much of the work, this movement in 3rds replaces the standard I-IV-V chord progression. Koepke's tendency to write in 3rds is vividly illustrated in "Agnus Dei." The text is stated three times as it is traditionally performed in the Mass. Each statement begins in e minor, and progresses to G major at the end of the words "peccata mundi." The second half of the statement "miserere nobis" changes each time, which provides a small push to the end of the work. The first ends on a B chord with no third, the second on a D major chord, and the third closes out the entire work on a G major chord to support the change in text, "dona nobis pacem." In an interview with the composer, Koepke stated that he loved the feeling that this motion by 3rds created.⁵⁰

The 6/4 Chord

The use of the 6/4 chord is prominent in *Missa Brevis* and is used for various reasons. First, the 6/4 chord is used to act as an intermediary between other target chords. Koepke uses these types of chords extensively to carry out action throughout an entire movement, providing slight feelings of resolution, as root position chords are not used until the closing movements. These 6/4 chords are also used in tandem with the movement in 3rds to create smooth transitions in addition to prolonging action.

50. Ibid.

Subito Dynamics

Often, Koepke uses sudden dynamic changes to signal significant contrast in emotion. The tympani is used extensively at subito forte moments as the action heightens. Like the use of the 6/4 chord, these dynamic alterations also help to support and prolong the musical action throughout the work, and serve as additional moments of excitement and interest. Notable subito moments include: “Kyrie” measure 22, “Gloria” measures 35 and 60, “Credo” measures 114 and 141, “Sanctus” measure 12, and “Benedictus” measure 20.

CHAPTER 4

CONDUCTOR'S FOCUS IN THE PREPARATION OF *MISSA BREVIS**Rehearsal and Performance Notes and Considerations*

Great attention should be taken during rehearsals of *Missa Brevis* to remind the chorus members to use orchestral-appropriate consonants—as no choir ever has them after the orchestra arrives—especially during full orchestral passages to ensure the text can be clearly discerned over the instrumentation. The conductor should make the chorus director aware and responsible for working to this end in separate chorus rehearsals. Even though the chorus will have worked on this technique of lengthening and/or accenting certain consonants, the conductor will likely need to invite the chorus members to use orchestral consonants during full rehearsals. Koepke wrote several *a cappella* and solo sections that do not require such attention. These sections have light accompaniment, and with normal text, and consonant accentuation by the singers, clarity of the text should be apparent.

Thorough study of the score and strategic score markings are needed for a proper performance of *Missa Brevis*. Like most choral-orchestral works, musical ideas occur concurrently that require the conductor's complete command and control of the forces. Precise releases and entrances, especially for the chorus, and important instrumental cues, require comprehensive knowledge of the score. Battisti and Garofalo brilliantly described score study, and becoming familiar with the score with the following analogy:

Score reading is like walking down a path through the woods with an alert, concentrated mind and an observant, perceptive attitude. Each time you do it, you discover something new in the environment. If you do it three, four, or five times every day, eventually you will get to know the path and its environment so well

that you will be able to walk through it with your eyes closed, yet see, hear, and smell the surroundings.⁵¹

Gesture

A choral conductor that considers a performance of *Missa Brevis* should be prepared to widen his/her conducting box. Choral conductors tend to have smaller conducting gestures than those exhibited by their instrumental counterparts because the inherent needs of a choral ensemble are typically more intimate than the needs of an instrumental ensemble. Because of the number of the forces needed to produce a performance of *Missa Brevis*, logically all gestures must become noticeable from a long distance.

Even though many choral conductors do not use a baton, it is imperative that one be used conducting this piece to aid in the conductor's gestural clarity. Care should be taken to choose a baton length that will be visually effective for the specific performance hall, and comfortable for the conductor. In fortissimo passages, such as measures 22-24 of the "Kyrie," and measures 114-121 of "Credo," a mirrored gesture that involves both fully extended arms is recommended. This type of gesture that encompasses the entire body will ensure that the conductor's communication through gesture is enhanced and clear to all performers.

The changing meters in *Missa Brevis* can be rather complex. Constant meter changes for some conductors can be a cause for some angst. Negotiation of these meter changes will warrant attention by the conductor before rehearsals begin. Koepke

51. Frank Battisti and Robert Garofalo, *Guide to Score Study for the Wind Band Director*. Ft Lauderdale, FL: Meredith Music Publications, 1990.

composed several measures of 8/4 and 6/4 that should be identified, and resolved within the gesture before stepping in front of the ensemble. It is recommended that special markings for these particular measures be prominent in the score to aid during rehearsals and performances. Max Rudlof speaks to changing meter and tempo:

Changes of meter and meter within an ongoing movement occur infrequently in Classical music. They are found mostly at the beginning of a new section, as at the transition from a slow introduction to the lively main section in a symphony or overture, or in the course of an operatic finale where shifting stage action must be integrated with the music. In modern scores, however, such changes may occur at any point as part of the musical fabric from phrase to phrase, even from one bar to another. From the conductor they require careful study and an unmistakable beat.⁵²

Some tempo changes in *Missa Brevis* are abrupt. While these tempo changes add interest, and even excitement to the piece, clarity of the beat is important for the ensemble. Regarding the measures of 8/4, Dr. Bruce Chamberlain sketched two square boxes into each 8/4 measure as a visual aid. The first box represented the first half of the measure and the second represented the final half of the measure.⁵³ The insertion of these boxes drew special attention to the measures and served as a reminder to Dr. Chamberlain to purposeful in his gesture, and to conduct these measures a certain way to guarantee performance precision.

52. Max Rudolf, *The Grammar of Conducting: A Comprehensive Guide to Baton Technique and Interpretation* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1994), 281.

53. Allen Koepke, *Missa Brevis*, Dr. Bruce Chamberlain marked score, (Chapel Hill, NC: Hinshaw Music Inc., 1995).

Soloists and Placement

Frequently soloists are placed in front of the stage in front of the choir and orchestra. Depending on the hall, this may not be the best place for them. Performance spaces are all different and the best place for these singers may be in another area of the stage. The conductor should experiment with soloist placement. Don V Moses, Robert W. Demaree, Jr. and Allen F. Ohmes agree:

Experiment with placement of soloists. (There are at least three problems here: the audience must see the singers, the soloists must be able to carry over the sound of an orchestra and chorus, and they are accustomed to standing in front of the orchestra.) Historically, up to Beethoven or so, soloists were chosen from the choirs used, and stood among their colleagues when they sang. Do not lock yourself into the pattern of always putting the soloists in front of the orchestra; between the chorus and the orchestra may be best, providing the sightlines are reasonably good. This arrangement makes it easier for soloists to hear balance, and much easier for the orchestra players to hear the soloists. When these singers cluster around the conductor, on the other hand, the principals often have difficulty seeing the conductor, and – unable to hear the soloists well – play too loudly.⁵⁴

Rhythm, Meter and Tempo

Generally, the chorus will find *Missa Brevis* to be rhythmically straight-forward. The homophonic nature of Koepke's writing style will seem accessible through much of the piece. The 6/4 and 8/4 measures mentioned previously, however, are ideal examples of how change in meter, and moderately complex rhythm can affect the accuracy of the chorus. Measures 35-44 of "Gloria," illustrate an otherwise fairly simple rhythm that is complicated by changes in meter:

54. Don V Moses, Robert W. Demaree Jr., and Allen F. Ohmes, *Face to Face with an Orchestra* (Princeton, New Jersey: Prestige Publications, Inc., 1987), 26.

Figure 7:

Figure 7 displays a musical score for a vocal ensemble, featuring four staves. The score is written in 6/4 time and includes dynamic markings such as *mf* and *f*. The lyrics are in Latin, and the score includes measures 35 through 42. The lyrics are as follows:

35 *mf* Lau - da - mus te, — be - ne di - ci - mus te, — 36 A - do - ra - mus te — 37 Glo - ri - fi - ca - mus te — 38

39 *f* Gra - ti - as a - gi - mus ti - bi Prop - ter ma - gnam glo - ri - am tu - am, 40 Accented! Do - mi - ne De - us, 41 Rex coe - le - stis, 42

43 *f* Gra - ti - as a - gi - mus ti - bi Prop - ter ma - gnam glo - ri - am tu - am Do - mi - ne De - us, Rex coe - le - stis,

44 *f* Gra - ti - as a - gi - mus ti - bi Prop - ter ma - gnam glo - ri - am tu - am Do - mi - ne De - us, Rex coe - le - stis,

45 *f* Gra - ti - as a - gi - mus ti - bi Prop - ter ma - gnam glo - ri - am tu - am Do - mi - ne De - us, Rex coe - le - stis,

These changes in meter require strict focus from the singers and clear direction from the podium.

It should be noted that in many instances, a tempo change also accompanies the shift in meter. This additional layer is one that should be handled with care. In Figure 6 above, the metronome marking suddenly increases from 60 to 130 reflecting the text.

Intonation

Of all of Koepke's compositions, *Missa Brevis* is the most challenging for choral singers. The chorus members must therefore rely on a good individual sense of pitch to ensure excellence in intonation. The intervallic complexity, tessitura, and chromaticism are factors that result in possible problems with intonation. Complex melodic ideas occur within the piece that present additional tuning challenges. Consider measures 62-66 of "Sanctus." Koepke incorporates all of the challenges listed above, but the soprano line additionally, must negotiate a high A-Flat for seven and a half beats. Another factor that can impede the untrained singer's pitch accuracy is the frequency of modulation. These sudden shifts in key center appear throughout *Missa Brevis*, and will require the chorus to be diligent listeners as they move through each movement.

Orchestral Needs

Table 3: Orchestra Instrumentation

1	flute
1	piccolo
2	oboes
2	clarinet
2	bassoon
4	horn
1	trumpet
3	trombones
1	tuba
Set	tympani
Set	chimes
Set	cymbals
1	tambourine
2	violins
1	viola
2	cellos
1	bass

Special Needs

Missa Brevis is generally straightforward in its performance needs. A large choir is needed so that the singers may be heard over the instrumentation. As stated earlier, the Carnegie Hall premier featured 140 singers. The piece can be performed with a smaller number of singers. However, an appropriate number should be chosen that would balance well with the orchestra. Additionally, Koepke wrote complex tambourine and tympani parts. Both are used to accent certain passages of the music. While these instruments are not included throughout, the sections that do include these parts require skilled percussionists with strict precision.

Score Markings

“Kyrie”

Table 4: Score markings

Measure	Beat	Conducting Action	Dynamic or Purpose
1	2	Cue chimes	<i>mp</i>
2	Downbeat	Cue strings	<i>mp</i>
2	and of 2	Cue oboe	<i>mp</i>
2	4	Cue bassoon	<i>mp</i>
3	Downbeat	Cue flute	<i>mp</i>
3	3	Cue bass	<i>mp</i>
3	and of 2	Cue clarinet	<i>mp</i>
4	Downbeat	Cue tenor soloist	<i>f</i>
5	Downbeat	Cue trumpets and	<i>p</i>

		trombones	
5	2	Cue horns	<i>mp</i>
6	Downbeat	Cue horn accents	<i>ff</i>
6	Downbeat	Release violins	
6	4	Cue tympani	<i>f</i>
7	Downbeat	Release woodwinds and brass	
7	2	Cue men's voices	<i>mf</i>
7	4	Cue women's voices	<i>mf</i>
8	and of 4	Release chorus	Textual clarity
9	Downbeat	Cue tenors	<i>f</i>
9	2	Cue strings and bassoons	<i>mf</i>
9	and of 2	Cue oboes	<i>mf</i>
9	4	Cue clarinets	<i>mf</i>
10	3	Cue horns	<i>f</i>
11	Downbeat	Cue chorus	<i>f</i>
11 and 12	2	Cue trumpet	<i>mf</i>
13	3 and 4	Cue brass and tympani	<i>f</i>
14	Downbeat	Cue cymbal	<i>f</i>
14	and of 1	Cue women's voices	<i>f</i>
14	and of 3	Cue men's voices	<i>f</i>
18	Downbeat	Release brass	
18	Downbeat	Cue solo woodwinds and oboe with echo motive	<i>p</i>

20	Downbeat	Cue oboes echo motive	<i>mf</i>
21	Downbeat	Cue horns and trumpet	<i>f</i>
21	2	Cue trombones and tuba	<i>f</i>
21	3	Cue bass	
22	Downbeat	Cue cymbal	<i>ff</i>
26	Downbeat	Global release, release while cellos continue	<i>subito pp</i>

“Gloria”

Table 5: Score markings

Measure	Beat	Conducting Action	Dynamic or Purpose
27	Downbeat	Cue men’s voices and oboe solo	<i>p</i>
28	Downbeat	Cue women’s voices, clarinets and bassoons	Voices <i>mp</i> Instruments <i>p</i>
30	Downbeat	Meter change to 2/4	
31	Downbeat	Meter change to 4/4	
31	Downbeat	Cue bassoons	<i>p</i>
31	2	Cue flute melodic motive	<i>mp</i>
32	3	Release sopranos	
32	4	Release altos, tenors and basses and cue sopranos	<i>p</i>
35-39	Downbeat	Meter change to 6/4	

		Change pattern	
35	Downbeat	Cue full orchestra special focus to tambourine	<i>mf</i>
37	Downbeat	Cue bass	<i>f</i>
40	Downbeat	Meter change to 8/4 Change pattern	
41	Downbeat	Meter change to 4/4 Change pattern	
43-44	Downbeat	Meter change to 8/4 Change pattern	<i>ff</i>
45	Downbeat	Meter change to 4/4	<i>f</i>
47	Downbeat	Cue woodwinds	<i>mp</i>
48	Downbeat	ritardando	
50	Downbeat	Release woodwinds and brass while strings sustain	<i>pp</i>
50	and of 4	Cue women's voices	<i>p</i>
52	Downbeat	Cue men's voices	<i>p</i>
53	3	Cue horns	<i>p</i>
55	Downbeat	Cue woodwinds, horns, women's voices	<i>mp</i>
55	4	Cue men's voices	<i>mf</i>
56	Downbeat	Cue trombones and tuba	<i>mf</i>
57	Downbeat	Meter change to 3/4	
57	Downbeat	Cue trumpet and tympani	<i>mf</i>
62	Downbeat	Meter change to 4/4	

65	Downbeat	ritardando	
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“Credo”

Table 6: Score markings

Measure	Beat	Conducting Action	Dynamic or Purpose
67	3	Cue chimes	<i>mp</i>
68	Downbeat	Cue men's voices	<i>p</i>
74	Downbeat	Cue women's voices	<i>mp</i>
77	3	Cue horns and chimes	<i>mf</i>
78	Downbeat	Cue oboes and strings	oboes <i>mf</i> strings <i>mp</i>
80	3	Cue woodwinds and horns	<i>mf</i>
80	and of 4	Release chorus	Textual clarity
81	Downbeat	Cue women's voices	<i>mf</i>
82	Downbeat	Release women's voices and cue men's voices	<i>mf</i>
82	4	Cue trombones and tuba	<i>mf</i>
82	and of 4	Cue women's voices	<i>f</i>
84	Downbeat	Release women's voices	
85	Downbeat	Release trombones and tuba and cue women's voices	<i>f</i>

87	Downbeat	Release woodwinds and horns	
88	and of 4	Release chorus	Clarity of diction
96	4	Cue flutes and clarinets	<i>p</i>
97	Downbeat	Release chorus	
97	2 At least one recording has changed this to the and of 1 for more proper syllabic stress	Cue soprano soloist	<i>mf</i>
98	3	Cue bassoons	<i>p</i>
98	and of 3	Cue oboes	
101	Downbeat	Release woodwinds	
101	2	Cue bass soloist	<i>mf</i>
104	Downbeat	Cue woodwinds	<i>mp</i>
105	and of 1	Cue soprano and tenor soloists	<i>f</i>
106	4	Cue horns	<i>mf</i>
109	and of 1	Cue tutti chorus	<i>ff</i>
111	Downbeat	Release horns	
114-117	All beats	Cues for cymbal, chorus and brass entrances	Heavily accented <i>ff</i>
118	and of 2 and 4	Cue chimes	<i>ff</i>
119	and of 2	Cue chimes	<i>ff</i>
119	3 and 4	ritardando	
120	1	a tempo	

121	and of 4	Release woodwinds, horns, brass and chorus	Clarity of diction
125	Downbeat	Cue woodwinds	
130	Downbeat	Cue tympani	<i>f</i>
131-134	All beats	Strong ictus	Heavily accented <i>ff</i>
135	Downbeat	Change in pattern size	<i>mf</i> <i>legato</i>
136	and of 2	Cue trombones and tuba	<i>mf</i>
139	Downbeat	Cue woodwinds	<i>mf</i>
141	Downbeat	Cue tympani and chimes	<i>ff</i>
141	and of 4	Cue chorus	Heavily accented <i>ff</i>
143	Downbeat	Cue trumpets, trombones and clarinets	<i>ff</i>
145	Downbeat	ritardando	
145	2	Conduct chorus	<i>ff</i>
145	4	Cue tympani	<i>ff</i>
146	All beats	Cue chimes	<i>fff</i>
147	Downbeat	Global release	

“Sanctus”

Table 7: Score markings

Measure	Beat	Conducting Action	Dynamic or Purpose
1	Downbeat	Cue cellos and bass	<i>pp</i>
2	Downbeat	Cue violins, and men’s voices	<i>p</i>
2	3	Cue viola, and women’s voices	<i>p</i>
5	and of 4	Release chorus	Clarity of diction
6	Downbeat	Cue chorus	<i>mp</i>
7	3	Release chorus and cue woodwinds and horns	<i>mf</i>
8	Downbeat	Cue chorus	<i>mf</i>
12	Downbeat	Cue brass	<i>f</i>
14	Downbeat	Release woodwinds, trumpet, trombones, tuba, and chorus	

“Benedictus”

Table 8: Score markings

Measure	Beat	Conducting Action	Dynamic or Purpose
16	Downbeat	Cue woodwinds and chorus	<i>mf</i>
17	2	Larger gesture	<i>crescendo to f</i>
19	Downbeat	Cue horns	<i>ff</i>
20	Downbeat	Cue tympani and cymbals	<i>ff</i>

20-25	All beats	Strict strong accented gesture	<i>ff</i>
26	Downbeat	Release chorus	
28	Downbeat	Release trombones and tuba	
29	Downbeat	Release horns and trumpet	
31	Downbeat	ritardando	

“Agnus Dei”

Table 9: Score markings

Measure	Beat	Conducting Action	Dynamic or Purpose
34	1	Cue chimes	<i>p</i>
34	2	Cue solo flute, solo oboe, clarinets and women’s voices	Instruments <i>pp</i> Chorus <i>p</i>
38	Downbeat	Release woodwinds and women’s voices	
38	Downbeat	Cue bassoons and men’s voices	Instruments <i>pp</i> Chorus <i>mp</i>
40	Downbeat	Release bassoons and cue chimes	<i>p</i>
40	2	Cue women’s voices	<i>p</i>
44	Downbeat	Release women’s voices and cue men’s voices	<i>p</i>
46	Downbeat	Cue chimes and string bass line	Chimes <i>p</i> Bass <i>p</i>

46	2	Cue women's voices	<i>pp</i>
50	Downbeat	Release string bass and cue men's voices	
52	Downbeat	ritardando	
54	2 and 3	Cue chimes	<i>pp</i>
55	1	Cue chimes	<i>ppp</i>

Summary

Missa Brevis is the culmination of decades of Allen Koepke's compositional experience. The presentation of this work poses challenges for any conductor and choral ensemble. After assembling the appropriate forces, the conductor must work through complex rhythms, meter shifts, intervallic complexities, gesture clarity, and cueing throughout the rehearsal process. It is clear that *Missa Brevis* is Allen Koepke's most challenging published composition, but with attention to detail and thorough score study, obstacles can be overcome that it will present a challenge to any organization deciding to program a performance.

CHAPTER 5

SYNTHESIS AND CONCLUSION

Dr. Christian Tiemeyer is one of the few conductors who have had the privilege of conducting *Missa Brevis*. He describes the piece as impressive, moving, and extremely well written.⁵⁵ Dr. Bruce Chamberlain shared the same sentiments with me in an interview that I conducted in the fall of 2012. *Missa Brevis* is arguably the most mature, and well-crafted composition of Kopeke's catalogue, and yet, its performances have been remarkably few. I would postulate that there are several reasons for the low number of performances.

Missa Brevis is a piece that can only be performed if an organization has large forces, leaving the performance of it to universities, or community and sometimes professional organizations that can combine the appropriate orchestral and choral demands dictated by the piece. Lasting only 13 minutes, the work is moderately demanding at all levels and requires key components found frequently in organizations listed above. Secondly, *Missa Brevis* has been under-advertised. Whether the silence about the work exists because of the publisher's lack of promotion, or some other reason, conductors do not know about this work. It may take the exposure of being performed by major orchestra and a recording by such an ensemble for the work to garner more attention. Also, orchestras, while they want to promote and perform new works, are far too often drawn to the compositions that are already proven, leaving works like *Missa Brevis* on the shelf waiting to be performed.

55. Christian Tiemeyer, telephone interview with author, October 15, 2012.

Missa Brevis deserves more performances and a bigger stage. Koepke's outstanding writing style in this piece positions it among some of today's exceptional works of its kind. Approached by seasoned conductors with appropriate resources, Koepke's longest published work can prove challenging, yet accessible, and enjoyable to many audiences.

Some titles in Allen Koepke's catalogue continue to sell extremely well. "Praise the Name of God With a Song," "And Nature Smiled," "Wade in de Water," "Instruments of Praise," and "Dance on My Heart" are favorites and are most familiar with choral conductors. Choral writing that demonstrates the composer's great attention to text and text painting exists in all of his music. Well crafted, and thoughtful choral compositions that challenge society and the human condition are rare these days, which is what makes Allen Koepke's music such a gift. However, there are dozens of Koepke pieces that have been forgotten that employ the same brilliance found in the previously mentioned compositions that need to be rediscovered.

APPENDIX A

CHRONOLOGICAL ANNOTATED LISTING OF PUBLISHED CHORAL WORKS

N.B.: A good deal of Allen Koepke's music is out of print. The composer let me borrow the out of print works for this study. The other works included in this appendix were obtained from publishers. This list is chronologically arranged. A list of Koepke's unpublished choral music can be found in Appendix B.

"Come Ye, Come All Ye People"

Description: Composition for double choir, *a cappella*

Length: 83 measures

Duration: 4:00

Publisher: Schmitt, Hall & McCreary Company

Copyright: 1973

Remarks: This is Allen Koepke's first published composition. It is written in quodlibet with two melodies that interchange, and eventually are sung simultaneously with the third melody, "O Come All Ye Faithful."

"Praise the Name of God with a Song"

Description: Work for SATB chorus *a cappella*

Length: 43 measures

Duration: 2:00

Publisher: Hal Leonard Corporation

Copyright: 1980

Remarks: This is the second piece Koepke sent to any publisher. The composition's difficulty lies in the meter changes and rhythmic complexity. Some tonalities tend to be a challenge. It has been well received and programmed for decades, usually as an opener.

"Lord, I Wanna Climb, But I Keep Slippin' Away"

Description: Spiritual for SSAATTBB chorus, *a cappella*

Length: 31 measures

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation

Copyright: 1985

Remarks: This is the first of six spirituals by Koepke. Most spirituals that are arrangements of pre-existing lyrics, but Koepke wrote this piece in its entirety.

“While I Live I Will Praise the Lord”

Description: Unknown

Length: Unknown

Duration: Unknown

Publisher: Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation

Copyright: 1985

Remarks: This piece is unfound at the writing of this document.

Five Lenten Anthems

1. “Forty Days and Forty Nights”

Description: Composition for SATB chorus, *a cappella*

Length: 36 measures

Duration: 4:00

Publisher: Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation.

Copyright: 1986

Remarks: This is part of series written for Holy Week. It can be performed separately or in a Tenebrae Service.

Five Lenten Anthems

2. “My Song is Love Unknown”

Description: Composition for SATB chorus, *a cappella*

Length: 29 measures

Duration: 2:00

Publisher: Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation.

Copyright: 1986

Remarks: This is part of series written for Holy Week. It can be performed separately or in a Tenebrae Service.

Five Lenten Anthems

3. “Thy Cross, O Jesus, Thou Didst Bear”

Description: Composition for SATB chorus, *a cappella*

Length: 45 measures

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation.

Copyright: 1986

Remarks: This is part of series written for Holy Week. It can be performed separately or in a Tenebrae Service.

Five Lenten Anthems**4. “Ah, Holy Jesus”**

Description: Composition for SATB chorus, *a cappella*

Length: 19 measures

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation.

Copyright: 1986

Remarks: This is part of series written for Holy Week. It can be performed separately or in a Tenebrae Service.

Five Lenten Anthems**5. “‘Tis Finished! So the Savior Cried”**

Description: Composition for SATB chorus, *a cappella*

Length: 17 measures

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation.

Copyright: 1986

Remarks: This is part of series written for Holy Week. It can be performed separately or in a Tenebrae Service.

“In Everything Give Thanks”

Description: Thanksgiving anthem for SATB chorus, keyboard and brass quintet

Length: 65 measures

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation.

Copyright: 1986

Remarks: This composition is rhythmically challenging because of the changing meters. Brass parts are included.

Jesus is King! (multi-movement work)

Description: Palm Sunday anthem, Introit and Benediction for SATB chorus and piano

“Anthem”

Length: 44 measures

Duration: 3:00

“Introit”

Length: 12 measures

Duration: 1:00

“Benediction”

Length: 9 measures

Duration: 1:00

Publisher: Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation.

Copyright: 1986

Remarks: This is a high-energy piece for Palm Sunday. Care must be taken to ensure that the trumpets balance well with the singers.

“Kum Bah Ya”

Description: Traditional spiritual for SSAATTBB chorus, *a cappella*

Length: 89 measures

Duration: 5:00

Publisher: Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation.

Copyright: 1986

Remarks: The piece starts simply with a female solo singing the traditional tune. The choral supporting material is first with “loo,” then with text. The piece ends simply again with a soloist singing the melodic material.

“Why This Child?”

Description: Sacred anthem for SAATTB chorus, piano, 2-3 fl. or 1 ob.

Length: 37 measures

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation.

Copyright: 1986

Remarks: This is a Christmas anthem that asks about the meaning of Christ’s birth. Beginning and ending with solos, this piece features homophonic choral writing accompanied by piano and woodwinds.

“Holy Spirit, Dove Divine”

Description: Sacred composition for SATB chorus and keyboard

Length: 46 measures

Duration: 4:00

Publisher: Good Life Publications Incorporated

Copyright: 1987

Remarks: The piece was written for Pentecost Sunday or it can be used for general purposes throughout the church year. It begins in with all voices in unison. The piece reaches full harmony at measure 13. This is another homophonic piece by Koepke.

“Get Out-A My Life!”

Description: Secular satirical piece for SATB chorus and optional. piano

Length: 49 measures

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: Kimmel Publications, Incorporated

Copyright: 1988

Remarks: This is a tongue in cheek satirical reply to romantic ballads. This kind of satirical writing is unique in Koepke’s catalogue.

“In Bethlehem”

Description: Sacred anthem for SATB chorus and piano

Length: 59 measures

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation.

Copyright: 1988

Remarks: Set for Advent or Christmas, this peaceful setting with words and music written by Koepke, uses frequent arpeggio accompaniment in the right hand of the piano. The key centers are D minor and E-flat major.

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

Description: Sacred anthem for SATB chorus and piano

Length: 48 measures

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation.

Copyright: 1988

Remarks: Koepke set this John Wesley text to an entirely new melody. He harmonizes the melody traditionally with the lower voices.

“Risen, Alleluia!”

Description: Sacred anthem for SATB chorus and piano or organ and optional brass

Length: 65 measures

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: Schmitt, Hall & McCreary Company

Copyright: 1988

Remarks: Two trumpets, two trombones and organ accompany this homophonic piece. Accidentals make this composition more difficult than some other works by Koepke.

“The Lord is My Shepherd”

Description: Sacred anthem for SATB chorus and piano

Length: 60 measures

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: H.W. Gray Publications

Copyright: 1988

Remarks: This is a setting of the familiar biblical text from the 23rd Psalm. It is dedicated to his wife, Sherill. The voices are accompanied by piano.

“The Sea is Now Calling”

Description: Secular composition for Unison, TB, TBB or TTBB chorus, with optional flute or recorder

Length: 124 measures

Duration: 4:00

Publisher: Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation.

Copyright: 1988

Remarks: The piece was dedicated to the U.S. Naval Academy Glee Club, Dr. John Barry Talley, conductor.

“And Then He Died”

Description: Sacred composition for SATB chorus and organ or piano

Length: 52 measures

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation.

Copyright: 1989

Remarks: This anthem was written for performance during the Lenten season. Allen Koepke wrote all of the words and music. The writing style is homophonic.

“In Remembrance”

Description: Sacred anthem for SATB chorus and piano

Length: 54 measures

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation.

Copyright: 1989

Remarks: The piece was dedicated to St. John’s Episcopal Choir, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

“Our Prayer for Today and for the New Year”

Description: Sacred anthem for SATB chorus and piano

Length: 48 measures

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: Schmitt, Hall & McCreary Company

Copyright: 1989

Remarks: Koepke uses one of his favorite compositional techniques in this piece. The composer shifts from the key of C major to a minor 3rd higher to E-Flat major.

“Now Come, O Promised One”

Description: Sacred composition for SATB chorus and piano

Length: 43 measures

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation.

Copyright: 1990

Remarks: This is a difficult, homophonic Advent anthem. The piece would challenge many church choirs.

“Come to the Manger”

Description: Sacred composition for SATB chorus and piano

Length: 72 measures

Duration: 4:00

Publisher: Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation.

Copyright: 1990

Remarks: This piece was dedicated to the composer’s parents, Dorothy and Henry Koepke.

“O Lamb of God, I Come”

Description: Sacred composition for SATB chorus and piano

Length: 53 measures

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation.

Copyright: 1990

Remarks: This composition sets the familiar text by Charlotte Elliot, “Just as I Am, Without One Plea.” Koepke set these words to a completely different melody.

“And Nature Smiled”

Description: Composition for SSA chorus and piano

Length: 73 measures

Duration: 4:15

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 1992

Remarks: This composition is one of Koepke’s most popular pieces. The poignant words coupled with the composer’s favorite writing technique, modulating by thirds, adds to its appeal. This version is the original, scored for women.

“And Nature Smiled”

Description: Composition for TBB chorus and piano

Length: 73 measures

Duration: 4:15

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 1992

Remarks: This composition is one of Koepke’s most popular pieces. The poignant words coupled with the composer’s favorite writing technique, modulating by thirds, adds to its appeal. This version was re-scored for men choir at the request of Dr. Peter A. Eklund for the University of Nebraska Varsity Men’s Chorus.

“Dance on My Heart”

Description: Contemporary madrigal for SSA chorus and piano

Length: 47 measures

Duration: 2:35

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 1992

Remarks: This piece won the 1991 Iowa Choral Director’s Association Composition Contest and has sold over 175,000 copies to date. This is Koepke’s best selling composition.

“Festival Psalter”

Description: Sacred anthem for SSAATTBB chorus, *a cappella*

Length: 113 measures

Duration: 4:00

Publisher: H.W. Gray Publications

Copyright: 1992

Remarks: This piece is through-composed, providing new melodic and harmonic material for each verse. This piece would be challenging for most church choirs.

“One More Mountain to Climb”

Description: Secular work for SATB or SAB chorus, piano, optional brass, guitar, bass, and drums

Length: 46 measures

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: Studio 224

Copyright: 1994

Remarks: Koepke dedicated this piece to his stepson Ryan who had a great many health issues and struggled socially because of them. The piece was probably not written specifically about Ryan’s situation, but the composer felt the need to dedicate it to Ryan when it was finished.

“Speak to the Child of Love”

Description: Secular work for SSA chorus and piano

Length: 57 measures

Duration: 3:15

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 1994

Remarks: Driven by the text, Speak to the Child of Love, attempts to define love. It was commissioned by the Rosemary High School Glee Club, Aurora, IL, Sr. Ann Mary Wagner, Director.

“Seeds of Hope”

Description: Composition for SATB chorus with piano and flute, oboe or violin accompaniment

Length: 76 measures

Duration: 4:00

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 1994

Remarks: This piece is a homophonic composition written to incorporate, the piano, flute and oboe parts if possible. The parts written for the woodwinds provide melodic contrast and countermelodies that would be missing if not played. It was commissioned by the Iowa Choral Directors Association for their July, 1995 convention, “In Celebration of Education.”

“Ad Te, Domine”

Description: Work for TTBB chorus, *a cappella*

Length: 54 measures

Duration: 3:10

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 1996

Remarks: This piece was commissioned by the Luther College Norsemen, Dr. Timothy Peter, conductor.

“A Vision, A Dream”

Description: Composition for SATB chorus and piano, optional brass, and percussion, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, 3 horns, tuba, string bass, timpani, snare, cymbals.

Length: 77 measures

Duration: 4:00

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 1996

Remarks: This piece was commissioned by the Cedar Rapids, Community School District in celebration of the Iowa Sesquicentennial.

Missa Brevis

Description: Short Mass in two parts for SATB chorus and orchestra with 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, trumpet, trombone, tuba, timpani, chimes, cymbal, tambourine, 2 violins, viola, 2 cellos, and bass

Part 1. “Kyrie,” “Gloria,” “Credo”

Length: 147 measures

Duration: 13:00

Part 2. “Sanctus,” “Benedictus,” “Agnus Dei”

Length: 55 measures

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: Hinshaw Music Incorporated

Copyright: 1995

Remarks: *Missa Brevis* is the composer’s seminal work. It was written for a Carnegie Hall performance by the University of Northern Iowa, Dr. Bruce Chamberlain, conductor.

“Instruments of Praise”

Description: Composition for SSAA chorus and piano

Length: 66 measures

Duration: 2:40

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 1996

Remarks: Based on Psalm 150, this women’s piece has become popular over the last decade. There are moments of homophony as well as instances of polyphony.

“Love”

Description: Two-part choral work voices and keyboard

Length: 42 measures

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 1996

Remarks: Dedicated to Lorraine Fox. The piece is written in quodlibet. Koepke composed a new melody that is performed simultaneously against the pre-existing, “Jesus Loves Me” melody. The text was adapted from I Corinthians 13:2-8, 13.

“Angels of the Wind”

Description: Work for TTB chorus, piano, 4 hands, optional flute, oboe (or 2nd flute), and clarinet

Length: 66 measures

Duration: 4:30-4:45

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 1997

Remarks: This piece was written for the Jefferson High School Select Men’s Choir, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Dr. Peter Eklund, Conductor. Three verses are included that are through-composed. It is written in the modern folk-song genre. The primo piano accompaniment indicates the stirring and urging of the angelic forces.

“Angels of the Wind”

Description: Work for SSA chorus, piano, 4 hands, optional flute, oboe (or 2nd flute), and clarinet

Length: 66 measures

Duration: 4:30-4:45

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 1997

Remarks: This is a women’s version of the original, which was scored for men’s voices. Three verses are included that are through composed. It is written in the modern folk-song genre. The primo piano accompaniment indicates the stirring and urging of the angelic forces.

“Come Down, O Love Divine”

Description: Composition for SATB chorus, keyboard and optional hand bells

Length: 56 measures

Duration: 3:20

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 1997

Remarks: The piece was dedicated to the music ministry at Christ Episcopal Church, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Fanfare of Triumph

Description: Multi-movement composition in 3 parts, for SATB chorus, organ, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, flute, oboe, clarinet

“The King” (Palm Sunday)

Length: 55 measures

Duration: 2:20

“The Lamb” (Good Friday)

Length: 60 measures

Duration: 4:00

“Risen” (Easter)

Length: 86 measures

Duration: 4:00

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 1998

Remarks: This piece was written for the Ames Chamber Artists, Ames, Iowa; Everett D. Johnson, conductor.

“Wade in de Water”

Description: Traditional Spiritual for SSAATTBB chorus, *a cappella*

Length: 76 measures

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 1998

Remarks: This piece was written for the Prairie High School Concert Choir, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Michael Reese, conductor, and their June 21, 1998 performance at Washington National Cathedral.

“Resurrection!”

Description: Composition for SATB chorus and org. with optional brass; (3 trumpets, 3 trombones, and tuba)

Length: 93 measures

Duration: 3:50-4:00

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 1999

Remarks: This piece was commissioned by the Ames Chamber Artists, Ames, Iowa, Everett D Johnson, conductor. The text is based on John 11:25, Romans 1:4, 6:5, I Peter 1:3 (RSV) altered.

“Ev’ry Time I Feel the Spirit” (with “Walk Together Children”)

Description: Traditional Spiritual for SATB chorus and SSA or SAT chorus, *a cappella*

Length: 85 measures

Duration: 3:50-4:00

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 2000

Remarks: This is a double choir, traditional spiritual written for the Crown Point High School Choral Department, Joanne Haley-Borodine, conductor.

“I Listened”

Description: Work for SATB (div.) chorus and piano, guitar, bass, flute, clarinet, single chime

Length: 68 measures

Duration: 4:00

Publisher: Hinshaw Music Incorporated

Copyright: 2000

Remarks: This piece was written for the Linn-Mar (Iowa) High School Chorale’s appearance at the 2000 ACDA Regional Convention on March 2, 2000; Robert Anderson, conductor. The original lyrics were written by Koepke’s oldest son, Scott Koepke, and given as a gift to the composer. Allen Koepke also wrote some of the lyrics to this piece.

“Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi”

Description: Anthem for SATB chorus and keyboard

Length: 66 measures

Duration: 4:00

Publisher: Hinshaw Music Incorporated

Copyright: 2002

Remarks: This piece was commissioned for the Marian Catholic High School Spartan Choir in Chicago Heights, Illinois, Nancy Mirocha, Director.

“The Miracle”

Description: Anthem for SATB chorus, *a cappella*

Length: 34 measures

Duration: 2:00

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 2002

Remarks: Subtitled, A Benediction for Peace, The piece begins unison, soon revealing harmonic material. Soprano and alto soloists are featured in the piece.

Happily Ever After (musical)

Description: School musical fantasy written for a cast of 15 featuring 9 females and 5 males.

Length: N/A

Duration: 60 minutes

Publisher: Brooklyn Publishers

Copyright: 2004

Remarks: This is the first of two musicals that Allen Koepke wrote for performance in upper elementary and middle schools. It entwines the storylines of “Little Red Riding Hood,” “Goldilocks, and the Three Bears,” and “The Three Little Pigs.”

Virgil’s Wedding (musical)

Description: School musical comedy written for a cast of 20 featuring 12 females and 8 males.

Length: N/A

Duration: 90 minutes

Publisher: Brooklyn Publishers

Copyright: 2005

Remarks: This is the second of two musicals that Allen Koepke wrote for performance in schools. This plot is more appropriate for the high school level. A great deal of comedy has been written into the production.

“Zekiel”

Description: Traditional Spiritual for SATB div chorus, and tenor solo

Length: 129 measures

Duration: 3:30

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 2006

Remarks: This piece was written for the Wartburg (Iowa) College Choir, Dr. Paul Torkelson, conductor. It is one of six traditional spirituals arranged by Allen Koepke. It is a setting of the familiar “Ezekiel Saw the Wheel.” The piece features a tenor soloist that begins the composition and leads the choir through a good portion of its midsection. The use of foot stomps add to the spiritual’s appeal.

“Follow the Drinking Gourd”

Description: Traditional spiritual for SSAATTBB chorus *a cappella*

Length: 71 measures

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 2007

Remarks: This is one of six arrangements of spirituals in Koepke’s catalogue. Koepke uses the traditional melody but sets it to a rich harmonic layering. The meter is mostly 12/8.

“Veni, Veni Emmanuel”

Description: Work for SSAATTBB chorus, *a cappella*

Length: 77 measures

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 2008

Remarks: This composition begins with the Latin text of the 9th Century plainsong melody. In the 2nd and 3rd verses, English is used.

“Wuh-Duh-Yuh Do with a Drunken Sailor?”

Description: Traditional sea chantey for TTB chorus and piano

Length: 92 measures

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 2008

Remarks: This piece is rhythmically clever. Koepke captured the feeling of balance instability by altering the traditional rhythm of this piece. Because of this, the melody seems to stumble throughout.

“May the World be As a Song”

Description: Composition for SATB chorus, piano and optional brass, (2 trumpets, and 2 trombones)

Length: 100 measures

Duration: 4:00

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 2009

Remarks: This piece was written for the 2009 Iowa All-State Opus Honor Choir, June Schmidt, conductor. The through-composed piece features frequent meter changes. The form is ABC.

“Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”

Description: Arrangement of the 15th Century German tune for SSAATTBB chorus,
a cappella

Length: 72 measures

Duration: 4:00

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 2011

Remarks: The piece begins in simple fashion, and builds to a dramatic ending with four soloists. The composition is antiphonal with women alternating with men.

“Zing Uh Boo Day”

Description: Composition for SSA chorus, piano

Length: 76 measures

Duration: 3:30

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 2012

Remarks: Santa Barbara Music Publishing describes the piece as a meaning-of-life spoof. The piece is purely for fun and is in three parts throughout.

“Dream It”

Description: Composition for chorus, piano.

Length: Unknown at the time of this publishing

Duration: Unknown at the time of this publishing

Publisher: Santa Barbara Music Publishing

Copyright: 2012

Remarks: This was the composer’s last composition. It was commissioned by the Ames Children's Choirs, Ames, Iowa, Gene LaVasseur, artistic director. The piece is due to be released after it premiers in April 2013.

APPENDIX B

ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF UNPUBLISHED WORKS

N.B.: This list of Koepke's unpublished works was compiled through communication with Allen Koepke's daughter Amy Hanisch and his wife Sherril after his death. Koepke admittedly did not keep good records of his music that has not been published. This appendix includes titles, and all information shared with the author by the family at the time of the publishing of this document. If additional unpublished compositions are found, an additional appendix will be considered.

“All Things New”

Description: Written for SATB and keyboard

Year of composition: 1995

“A Rose and a Lass”

Description: 2 Irish folk songs for TBB and piano.

Year of composition: Unknown

“Can You Imagine”

Description: A hope and vision of the new millennium. Written for SATB and keyboard with optional brass (this is the SATB arrangement of the original SA arrangement from *Trixie's Trunket*)

Year of composition: Unknown

“Christ Is Arisen, Alleluia”

Description: Dedicated to Martha and Vance Dimmick, Lovers Lane United Methodist Church, Dallas, Texas.

Year of composition: 2000

“Hodie Christus Natus Est”

Description: An Anthem of Fanfares and Proclamations. Scored for SSAA and TTBB *a cappella* double choir. Commissioned by the University of Northern Iowa for the UNI Chorale.

Year of composition: Unknown

“A Latin English Mass”

Description: Dedicated to Mon. Edmund Becker and All Saints Church, Cedar Rapids.

Year of composition: 1984

“Celebration of Praise”

Description: Scored for SATB choir, youth choir, congregation, organ, and piano with optional handbells, 2 trumpets, 2 horns, 2 trombones and timpani. Written for the celebration, and dedication of St. Mark’s Lutheran Church’s Faith and Life Center, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Year of composition: Unknown

“Christ the Rock”

Description: Commissioned by First Congregational Church, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, for Chancel Choir, Youth Choir, Bell Choir, Brass Choir, timpani, organ, piano and Congregation in memory of Milly Knapp on the church’s 125th anniversary

Year of composition: Unknown

“Fa la la”

Description: Dedicated to the Midwest Chorale, Dr. Bruce Chamberlain, conductor

Year of composition: Unknown

“Get On Board and Sing a New Song”

Description: Scored for SATB chorus with piano with brass and opt. bass.

Commissioned by St. John's Episcopal Church, Cedar Rapids, Iowa for the opening of New Song Episcopal Church, Coralville, Iowa.

Year of composition: 1994

“I Lift Up My Eyes”

Description: For the United Methodist Church of Eagle Grove, Iowa, in memory of Helen Irene Metcalf Davis

Year of composition: Unknown

“It's Been Great!”

Description: Solo and small orchestra composition written for Jim McDonough and his Holiday Grande.

Year of composition: 2010

“Just Watch Us Grow”

Description: Commissioned for the Marion Independent School District.

Year of composition: 2008

In Praise of Music

Description: Commissioned by the Iowa High School Music Association for the Iowa All-State Music Festival. Written for combined SATB All-State Chorus, Band and Orchestra in 5 parts.

Part I- Band and Chorus

Part II- Orchestra and Chorus

Part III-Orchestra; a portion of the 2nd movement of the “New World Symphony (#9) by Dvorak

Part IV- Band; United Nations march by Karl King, arr. James Swearingen

Part V- Chorus, Band, and Orchestra

Length: 42 measures (choral)

Duration: 10:00

Year of composition: 1996

“Matthew 2”

Description: Written in the 1970’s for Cedar Rapids Jefferson High School Concert Choir. (Cedar Rapids, Iowa)

Year of composition: Unknown

“Praise”

Description: Written and dedicated to the life and memory of Steve Colton, Linn-Mar band director. SATB, with piano, clarinet, 2 trumpets and 2 trombones. Premiered by the Linn Mar High School Chorale, Marion, Iowa. Robert Anderson, conductor.

Year of composition: 2007

“Praise and Assurance”

Description: Scored for SATB choir and organ. Commissioned by the Chancel Choir in honor of Jack Rain in celebration of his 40 years at First Presbyterian Church, St. Petersburg, Florida.

Year of composition: 2008

“Praise the Lord! Psalm 150”

Description: Fanfare or Choral Introit, scored for SATB.

Year of composition: 2004

“Ruler of Our Hearts”

Description: Scored for SATB and written for Palm Sunday.

Year of composition: Unknown

Trixie's Trunket (multi-movement work)

Description: Children's musical with 5, 2-part choral pieces and orchestra. Written for the Cedar Rapids Symphony Orchestra and Discovery Chorus

Year of composition: 1998

Te Deum (multi-movement work)

Description: Scored for SATB chorus, orchestra and optional organ. Commissioned by Lovers Lane United Methodist Church, Dallas, Texas in honor of organist, Clarece Candamio.

Year of composition: 1998

"The Miracle"

Description: A benediction for peace scored for SATB a cappella and SATB soloists

Year of composition: Unknown

"The Power of Love"

Description: Scored for SSAATTBB *a cappella* choir. Written for the Washington High School Concert Choir, (Cedar Rapids, Iowa), Dr. Gerald Kreitzer, conductor and their MENC performance.

Year of composition: 1994

"The Power of the Lord"

Description: Scored for SATB and piano with a gospel swing

Year of composition: Unknown

"Veni Creator Spiritus"

Description: Written for the Cedar Rapids Jefferson H.S. (Cedar Rapids, Iowa)

"Meistersingers' American Choral Directors Association appearance, Michael Reese, conductor

Year of composition: 2002

"With These Rings"

Description: SATB or solo with piano and optional flute. Written to commemorate the wedding of Erin Thompson and Mike Anderson.

Year of composition: Unknown

“Your Light Still Shines”

Description: Scored for SATB chorus, keyboard, bass and optional brass/guitar.

Commissioned by the Williamsburg High School Concert Choir, Williamsburg, Iowa, Steve Manning, director. In memory of Nathan Wiebold.

Year of composition: Unknown

APPENDIX C

TRANSCRIPTIONS OF INTERVIEWS WITH ALLEN KOEPKE, CONDUCTED IN
CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA ON AUGUST 2, AND 5, 2010 BY KEITH J.
CURINGTON, IN CONJUNCTION WITH RESEARCH FOR A DOCTORATE OF
MUSICAL ARTS IN CHORAL CONDUCTING AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA–LINCOLN

Curington: How many compositions would you say you have written?

Koepke: Written or published?

Curington: Written.

Koepke: Oh, my—written. Perhaps a hundred. I really have no idea. I have about sixty published, and I am thinking there are some that I have written that I have never even sent to a publishing house. There are some that I have sent to a publishing house that have been refused. So, you take those two together, and I would say thirty or forty—And I'm not even sure how many I've got published now. I don't really care. After I have done a song, I move on to something else. I don't think about it too much anymore.

Curington: At some point, I am going to get a number. We should be able to call Hinshaw and Santa Barbara.

Koepke: Alfred.

Curington: Alfred, to see what they've got.

Koepke: Because, yeah, you're right, and I think I said in an e-mail there are some things that I have written that are no longer available. So, do you count those or not? I mean that's the question. How many are actually in print that people are selling right now?

Curington: I think we do. They've been published, and just because they are out of print doesn't mean they are not worthy of this document, so I think I would really want to include them, if I could get copies of them somehow.

Koepke: That might be tricky. It's probably a matter of a combination of poor book keeping, poor filing—Like I said, it's not that I have a bad attitude about it, but when I do a piece, I 'm all excited about it until it's done, and then it's over and I really don't care about it that much. It's in the publisher's hands, and it's their song then anyway, and I just think about what I'm going to do next. I don't ever look back over my shoulder. With the exception of if something that I've done is particularly noteworthy and becomes a best seller, or I find out that it's being done by a number of All-State Choirs, and then I'll just reflect on it. But, it is not something that I carry around as a proud badge. I don't really care. I'll try to do what I can. I've written some things that were neither published or they were just performed by my high school choir forty years ago. There are some things I don't even remember the title of. It's a little nebulous. I will do what I can to try to investigate my stuff and see what I come up with. It's something that I haven't done before because I haven't really cared about it, but now I care because you care, so I'll do what I can.

Curington: Tell me some background. Where were you born? When?

Koepke: Born in Chicago, April 20th, 1939. That makes me 71-years-old. I started taking piano lessons when I was seven, probably at the urging of my mother who was a good musician, good pianist. She directed our children's church choir, so I sang in my mom's church choir as a child. It's one of those weird things that there were all sorts of indicators that I had some talent, but I didn't know that. How do you evaluate yourself? How do you know as a child of eight years old that you have perfect pitch? What is perfect pitch? I have it—Had it. I thought everybody did. When you hear a note on the piano, you know what the note is. I thought everybody could do that. I thought everybody could just sit down to the piano and start playing the current song that's on the radio. I could do that at age eight, and I didn't know that it was a special talent. So I began to discover things as I got older and older. I sang in the church choir and could always read music, and I began to discover that not everybody could read music like I could read music. That was one of the first indicators that maybe I had a special talent, although I don't think I ever said "I've got a special talent." You begin to discover that you can do some things that not everybody can do. I quit piano when I was thirteen-years-old because I would rather play ball. I didn't want to have to come home and play the piano and practice.

Curington: You were a jock?

Koepke: Yeah, yeah, I played basketball, I wrestled, I loved skating; I just liked all sports. I was really into athletics. At 71, I'm still playing tennis. I mean I love the game. Anyway, I quit piano at thirteen and kind of concentrated on athletics, although in Chicago, there is no choir before you get to high school. In Chicago, there is no middle school or junior high. It's grades K-8, and then you go to high school.

Curington: Growing up in Chicago, I know exactly what you are saying.

Koepke: Oh, you're a Chicago boy?

Curington: Yes

Koepke: What High School?

Curington: Lindblom Tech

Koepke: Okay, I was Kelvyn Park.

Curington: Okay.

Koepke: So, when I got to high school, and don't ask me why because I have no recollection, but I was—well, I joined the orchestra—And, I didn't even know I was going to play, but I took a fancy to the baritone, and the orchestra director said we need trombone players, and there isn't a whole lot of difference between the baritone and trombone. Would you play trombone? I said sure. So, my mom and dad went out and paid \$45 for a trombone for me. I played trombone through my freshman year in college. And, it was during my high school years that I didn't even sing. I sang in church choir, but I didn't sing in the school choir.

Curington: Why didn't you sing in the school choir?

Koepke: Because it was 95% girls and a couple of guys. And, I was a jock, and I wasn't going to sing in a choir with four or five other guys. The choir was, like, 150 people with five guys. I didn't want to do that. But, I sang in a church choir. Dan Tkach, I don't know if you know the name Tkach. Peter Tkach, his uncle, was director of music at Central Lutheran in Minneapolis, the main Lutheran church. This was his nephew, and Dan had a high school choir, East Leyden High School, in Franklin Park Illinois, probably the best high school choir, bar none that I've ever heard. The guy was unbelievable. He had, like, eight choirs in his high school. It was an incredible program, and he was my church choir director. So, he really got me into singing and choir music. I even had the opportunity occasionally as a high school student to, when Dan was gone, to direct the choir. That got me really interested in perhaps becoming a band director.

Curington: As Pete Eklund says, a B-flat band director. (Laughter)

Koepke: Yeah, I played in the high school orchestra.

Curington: The same instrument?

Koepke: Trombone, yeah. My junior year, we had moved from Chicago to Elmwood Park, suburb of Oak Park. It was a brand new high school. I was one of thirteen seniors. They didn't have a senior class. The school started out with freshmen, sophomores and juniors. And I was, if you remember in Chicago—You would have semesters, and you

could come in in September, or you could come in in January. All right? I was one of those guys that I had started school midway through the school year. They called it 1A or 1B and I was an A. So, when I moved to Elmwood Park, they told me that I had to go back and start my junior year all over again, even though I had my first semester finished at Kelvyn Park. And I said, "Why would I want to do that? Why would I want to lose half a year?" They said, "Well, we don't have a senior class." And I said, "But, if you look at my credits, I've got enough credits to graduate from any high school with one semester to go." And they went, "Well, yes, that's true." I said, "Well, why can't you just have a special compensation for people in my situation?" And, it turned out there were thirteen of us. They said, "No, you either start at Elmwood Park and go back a semester, or just stay at your Chicago school, and we will pay the tuition for that." I didn't want to do either. I didn't like Kelvyn Park High School. There were big gangs in the school. I didn't want to be a part of that anymore. So, I convinced the administration to let us be a senior class, even though it was off the books. The only thing that they had to do, if you remember in Chicago or in Illinois, you have to pass—you have to take a government test.

Curington: I think I had Constitution. That's what I had to take.

Koepke: Yeah, right, and they didn't offer that. They were going to offer it the next year. And I said, "Isn't there somebody in the school that can—?" They said, "Well, you have to pass the test, but we can probably have someone teach you the test. Okay?" Thirteen of us met after school for a couple of weeks, and we learned all of the salient information. We took the test, and we all passed. Can you imagine that being done today? Oh, my. Anyway, that was the only roadblock. And so, in 1956, at the end of that school year, I didn't graduate from high school because there was no graduation, because there was no senior class to graduate. I just left and went to Luther College. I went to Luther, and during the summer I was now going to be a sophomore at college, and I got a letter from Elmwood Park High School saying, "Would you like to participate in the graduation ceremony?" I said, "No, just send me the diploma." So, I went to Luther College.

Curington: What year was this?

Koepke: 1956. I was intent on being a band director. At Luther, we couldn't be in the top band or the top choir, so I joined what we called the Varsity Band playing trombone. I also joined the Chapel Choir. Bartlett Butler was the choir director, and he was fabulous, and I learned so much. But, the thing that was most valuable about it was I learned to love choral music. Choral music was something that I did that made my mom and dad happy because I sang in church choir, and I did get good instruction with Dan Tkach. But, my choice was instrumental music, mainly because during my junior year in high school, the Luther College Band came to Lane Tech and did a concert. I went to that concert and I heard the Luther College Band, Weston Noble conducting. A lot of people don't know he was a band director.

Curington: I think I did know that.

Koepke: In fact, it wasn't until nineteen-seventy-something that he said, "I'm going to give up one or the other," and he gave up the band in lieu of the choir. I heard the band, and I had never heard a band like that before. I mean, I was just blown away. So, that was it. I was going to go to Luther College and I was going to become a band director. But it was during my freshman year that I discovered choral music, I mean really discovered it, and I changed my mind.

Curington: Bartlett Butler was conducting what choir, did you say?

Koepke: Bartlett Butler was the choir director of the Chapel Choir

Curington: So, Weston was doing both the Band and Nordic Choir. How long then was Bartlett Butler there? Was he there the entire time?

Koepke: Yes, because after I graduated from Luther, I went to Clear Lake High School, and we had a conference music festival, for which it came due that I was supposed to choose the festival choir director, and I chose Bartlett. We called him "Black Bart." I loved him so much that when auditions for Nordic Choir came up, I wasn't so sure I wanted to sing in Nordic. I just loved Bart that much. Anyway, I did audition, and I made Nordic Choir for the next three years. Weston Noble was huge in my life. Not just as a mentor and someone I learned a great deal from, but he gave me opportunities, and did things for me that, without him, I don't know where I'd be right now. I certainly wouldn't be here in Cedar Rapids. First of all, he was gone a lot, and I was a very good theory and aural-skills student. My sophomore year, he asked me if I would be his TA. It wasn't just grading freshman theory papers and doing the tests and grading the tests and all of that, but when he was gone, I was also teaching. So, as a sophomore, I was now teaching freshman theory when he was gone. Like I said, he was gone a lot doing festivals and all of that. So, that was an opportunity that he gave me. The other thing is, he did a lot of music festivals, and he is a terrible driver. He would be the first to admit. Terrible driver. So, he would always have student drivers for when he'd go somewhere. I became one of two drivers that he counted on to take him. We went to a lot of music festivals where I sat and watched him work. Then, later as a junior and senior, he would say, "Why don't you do the men's choir thing?" or, "You do the women's choir thing," or, "Why don't you work on the finale piece?" or whatever, and so he began to give me directing opportunities. That was pretty big. In fact, one of the biggest things is he directed the Minneapolis Messiah, the Twin Cities Messiah, or whatever they called it. They had a choir of about a thousand and the Minneapolis Symphony, which is now, I think, the Minnesota Orchestra. We drove up there. I was a sophomore, and I remember saying in a teasing way—I wasn't really serious—I said, "Why don't you let me direct that? Turn the baton over to me for a couple of pieces." He said, "You haven't even had Conducting yet." I said, "I can conduct." He said, "I've never seen you in front of a group." I said, "I can do it." So, we got up there. You know that big gym they have up in Minneapolis where the basketball team plays? Williams Arena, I think it's called. It seats twenty-thousand people. Well, at one end they had the full symphony and then a

thousand voices into these seats going up. They had built a podium that was about fifteen-feet tall. You had to walk up like you were going up the gallows. A big platform up there for Weston and the music stand. So, I'm sitting out in the audience, and they had turned off all the lights except for that. So I'm sitting, one person in the audience, sitting out there in the blackness. He comes to the Hallelujah Chorus, and Weston turns around. He goes like this, "Where are you?" I said, "I'm here." He went, "Okay, big shot," and he threw the baton at me.

Curington: You are kidding me?

Koepke: I was eighteen-years-old. I ran and got the baton, and I ran up there, and I directed the Minneapolis Symphony. Wow, was that an experience.

Curington: That is quite a story.

Koepke: But, those were the kinds of things that Weston gave me. I started out directing at Springfield Lutheran Church my sophomore year. It was a little country church. There couldn't have been more than fifty or seventy-five people in the congregation. I was the choir director. So, I met with my choir, and we had, I think, seven in the choir. It was hurting big time. On Wednesday nights, I'd load up my car. I was able to get a car—that was my excuse for getting a car was I needed to get out to Springfield Lutheran. So, I'd load up the car with as many Nordic Choir people as I could possibly get in my car. And, they were loyal; they stayed with me the whole year. They'd come out and they'd rehearse with me, and then show up on Sunday morning. We could get about six in the car, and with that six or seven, I had fourteen or fifteen people in the choir. Boy, was it a good choir! So, I did that for two years, and then going into my senior year the position at Calmar opened up, Calmar Lutheran. So, I went to Calmar Lutheran my senior year. So, when I graduated from Luther, I had already had three years of church choir experience behind me. I'm at home my senior year at Easter vacation, and I got a call from Earl Berg, who was the superintendent of schools at Clear Lake. I had already interviewed at a couple of other places following graduation, and one of the places was Calmar Lutheran. The superintendent of the Calmar School District sang in my church choir. He wanted me to be the new choir director at Calmar Lutheran. I told him, "Why don't you let me think about this over vacation, and I'll give you an answer?" So, during vacation now, my phone rings, and it's Earl Berg at Clear Lake. Clear Lake: I think they still do have a pretty good reputation as being a good music town, and in 1960 they had a great reputation. So, Earl calls me, and he said, "Have you signed a contract yet?" I said, "No." He said, "I want you to come out to Clear Lake and interview." I said, "How did you find me? How did you know about me?" He said, "Do you know Weston Noble?" He said, "I called Weston, and he said, 'You want Allen Koepke.'" I said, "Okay." I came on out there, and they had a brand new high school, just built. They treated me really well, and I couldn't turn it down. I signed on at Clear Lake, and I was there for seven years. My brother is graduating from Luther College in 1967. I went to his graduation, and I am sitting in the back row of the gymnasium where they are holding the graduation exercises. The graduation is over with, and the faculty

comes down the middle row, and I'm right on the end. Weston Noble comes up, and he looks at me, and he says, "I got a new job for you." He said, "See me." I went, "What?" So, I saw him after the graduation, and I said, "What are you talking about?" He said, "There is an opening at Jefferson High School in Cedar Rapids. Are you interested?" Well, at that time I had done about all I could do at Clear Lake. It's a school of four hundred; we had three-hundred-and-fifty singing in the choirs. We had about three-hundred-and-fifty in the junior high. Three hundred of them were singing in my seventh- and eighth-grade choirs.

Curington: That's phenomenal.

Koepke: Well, yeah, and even at little old Clear Lake—it was either 1954 or 1955—you could enter seven quartets. At that time, they were chosen as a quartet; they were not chosen individually. You made it into All-State either as a quartet, or you didn't get in at all. I got seven quartets in. And, I was the only school in the state of Iowa that got all seven quartets in. That was a big thing. So, I see Weston, and he says, "Jefferson is open. You need to contact them, if you are interested." So, I called them, and said, "I understand you have an opening. I'm interested." The principal said, "I'm glad you called because we were going to call you if you didn't call us, because I called Weston Noble, and Weston said, 'Yeah you want to get Allen Koepke.' Do you see what I'm talking about?" So, I came to interview at Jefferson. They showed me the school and the town, and we got back from the five-hour tour, and William Paxton was the principal, and we got done, he said, "Okay, I've got a contract here. Sign it." I said, "I haven't even discussed this with my wife yet." She was along, and I looked at her, and I went "You want to move to Cedar Rapids?" She said, "It's your call." So, I signed the contract and moved to Cedar Rapids.

Curington: And, you've been here since then?

Koepke: Yeah, I went from Clear Lake to Jefferson to Kirkwood. Seven years at Clear Lake, thirteen years at Jefferson, sixteen years at Kirkwood, and then I got pancreatic cancer.

Curington: I remember that.

Koepke: I had to retire then. They had given me three or four months to live, and that was fourteen years ago. Some good doctors and the Mayo Clinic saved my life. I've had numerous other difficulties. The cancer is gone. After five years of coming back for my check-ups, the doctor said, "You're cancer free, it's over." I had to have a lot of extreme radiation, not just the normal radiation, but they were extremely aggressive with some of the things that they had to do. At the time they said, "Look, you're either going to live for another four months, maybe a year, or this radiation we're going to give you is going to prolong your life, maybe five years, but the radiation will kill you eventually." I said, "Yeah, Okay, let's do it. I'll take the five years." So, they started calling me the "Miracle Man" up at Mayo. I've had lots of things go wrong. I lost my right kidney a

couple of years ago because of radiation. I've had lots of internal bleeding, stomach particularly—radiation. Last year my bile duct and my intestine collapsed—radiation. Mayo clinic continues to save my life over and over and over again. Right now, I am doing relatively well, health-wise. I play tennis, and I messed my knee up pretty bad two months ago. I'm probably going to have to have my knee replaced someday. So, health-wise I'm doing pretty well right now. Nothing to complain about.

Curington: Where did you find your first inspiration to compose?

Koepke: I can remember it, sitting in my French class in high school. I got an idea that I wanted to write an arrangement of "Ol' Man River." I'm sitting in French class, Advanced French class with four girls. My French teacher got so angry at me because I was sitting in my class with staff paper, and I'm writing out an arrangement of "Ol' Man River." He was not happy with me. That was the first time I can remember that I actually took a pen and paper and began to compose.

Curington: This inspiration surely didn't come from what was being covered in French on that day.

Koepke: Oh, no. It was just something I had to do. The first piece that I ever wrote that was actually published—I wrote a song in Clear Lake for my junior high chorus. We had a good chorus, but there wasn't any literature. There was just crappy literature. So, I did it out of desperation. I had to write something for my group. So, I wrote this piece—no words to it, just nonsense syllables.

Koepke: That's what it was. In fact I even remember the tune:

Koepke: We recorded it, and it didn't have a name, so one day some girl said, "What's the name of this?" I said, "I don't know. It doesn't have a name. Why don't you name it?" She said "Okay. 'Guppies.' It reminds me of fish." "Guppies"—that was the first thing I ever wrote. We made a 45 record of it.

Curington: Do you still have it?

Koepke: No. One of my former students I'm sure has it somewhere. "Guppies." That's the first thing I remember writing for one of my choirs. The first piece I wrote that became published while I was at Jefferson High School. It was published in 1972 by Schmitt, Hall & McCreary, which I think became Curtis Music Press. Curtis was one of the employees of Schmitt, Hall & McCreary, and he formed his own publishing business out of Schmitt, Hall & McCreary. Schmitt Music is the big music store in Minneapolis. They've got big notes on the side of the building where the parking lot is. Curtis' sister was my high school choir director. I did sing in a choir. I forgot about this. When I went to Elmwood Park High School—remember I told you I left Kelvyn Park and went

to Elmwood Park?—I did sing in the choir. I did sing in the choir that year. Curt Hansen was the guy at Schmitt, Hall & McCreary, and it was Curtis Music Press, Curt Hansen. His sister, Bonnie Hansen, was my choir director at Elmwood Park High School. The only reason that I joined it is because she was an incredibly gorgeous woman. She stood in line right next to the band director, and when I was getting registered for high school, I registered for the band, and she says, “You sing?” I was singing in a church choir, and I looked at her, and said, “Yeah, I sing.” She was a St. Olaf grad. I forgot. I did sing in high school choir that year. Getting back, I was at Jefferson High School, and I wanted to write something for the Jeff choir. It wound up being a double choir a cappella piece called “Come Ye, Come All Ye People.” What it was... You sing this thing straight through, then you go back and repeat, and then members of the choir continue on singing “O Come All Ye Faithful.” So, you’ve got the two things going on in quodlibet. It turned out rather well, and I sent it to Schmitt, Hall & McCreary because I had been up there going through their stacks trying to find music and it was the only publishing company that I had ever visited. So, I just sent it up there. I had started a show choir camp at the International Music Camp in Bottineau, North Dakota. I remember being at the camp when I got the engravings of the piece to check over. I remember that real clearly. That was my first piece that was actually published. That was a pretty exciting time in my life. It was published in 1972. Then, I didn’t do anything as far as sending things to publishers for a long time. My last year at Jefferson High School, I used to do a retreat. We’d go out and actually go into the woods and spend a day in retreat, and we did all sorts of wonderful activities. While the kids were in the woods working on a project, I sat down. I had a Bible in the car and some music paper, and I decided that I was going to write something for the choir. So, I found some verses that I liked, and I started setting them to music. “I Will Praise the Name of God with a Song” is the name of it

Curington: One of my all-time favorite choral pieces.

Koepke: In fact, four or five years ago, Hal Leonard was putting together a series of three compilations. They were choosing what they thought were the best twenty songs written during the twentieth century. They were going to do that in SATB or mixed choir, men’s music and women’s music. They were going to put together a book that contained them with an analysis of each one of the pieces for anybody who was interested. They wrote me a letter, and they said, “Would you mind if we included your song in the top twenty ever written in the Twentieth Century?”

Curington: That’s quite an honor.

Koepke: Yeah, that was 1980, and it is still selling.

Curington: I just looked at it this morning, and I can’t wait to do it again this year. I’ll have to have you come down to Kansas City. There’s no way I can do this project and not have you come down to work with my kids. It’s just such a great and exciting piece.

Koepke: Here is the irony of the whole thing. I wrote that in four hours. In fact, it was less than that; I wrote it in about two hours in my car listening to the Iowa/Iowa State football game, which kind of diminishes it a little bit.

Curington: What?

Koepke: Yeah, but it's the truth. I remember I was using the steering wheel and a clipboard, and I'm just writing and writing and listening to the game, checking my lyrics, and I wrote the whole thing in two hours. If I have ever done anything that was just, I would say, inspirational—I mean the notes were just coming at me. I didn't have a piano; I had nothing, and I just wrote it. I got it all done and I went back home. I think I tweaked it a little bit, not much. Printed it, and had my Jefferson choir sing it that year. Then, I sent it to Jim Kimmel, who was then at Jensen Music, and Jim loved it. Jensen sold out to Hal Leonard, so now it's a Hal Leonard song. That was thirty years ago. Unbelievable. It's kind of funny, I don't know when it began, but every National ACDA Convention, which is every two years, for about fifteen years, some choir sang "Praise the Name of God with a Song." It was heard every two years at some ACDA National Convention.

Curington: It lends itself so well to being an outstanding opener.

Koepke: And, that's what I wrote it for. It's short

Curington: Short, wets the pallet, right in your face.

Koepke: Bingo Bango, here we go. That's why I wrote it.

Curington: Now where do you get your inspiration to write?

Koepke: I do a lot of commissions. Many times they will say, "I want you to do a piece about this or that." Sometimes they just say, "Whatever you want to write is fine." If it isn't biblically-based, like a psalm or something like that, I write my own lyrics. My inspiration comes from my lyrics. I know that almost sounds egocentric, but I can't do it the other way. I don't know how to do that.

Curington: One of my questions to you was going to be: What comes first, the chicken or the egg?"

Koepke: Well, the chicken comes first, and the chicken is the lyrics. I don't know how to do it the other way, and I know that some composers are very successful coming up with a tune and then writing words to the tune. This is especially true in popular music because you have to have a great hook. If you don't have a great hook and a tune, you're not going to have a great song. But, for me the inspiration for the music comes out of the lyric. Call it tone painting, if you want, or what we used to call madrigalism. It's tone painting. The aura of the music is set by the circumstance of the lyric. The other side of

the coin, in terms of inspiration, is when I teach composition, one of the very first things that students will ask me is, “How do you start writing a piece?” First, you have to have an idea of what you are writing about, what it is you’re going to do. If it is an instrumental piece alone, the pallet is wide open. If it is a choral piece, then it is limited to a more narrow focus, the words themselves. So, how do you start writing? I tell the students to put a note down, and you follow it with a couple more notes, molding it around the words. If you don’t like it, you go back to square one and you start all over again, but the inspiration comes from what you’ve just done. I don’t know how that happens, but you get ideas, then and pretty soon, you are so flooded with ideas that you are almost in desperation trying to get it down fast enough. In fact, I got to the point where I started using a tape recorder and I would sit at a piano. I don’t often compose at a piano. It depends—sometimes I feel comfortable at the piano. You hear it in your head anyway, but the advantage of using a piano is when you experiment around, you are going to make decisions. This I like, but I don’t care for this. So, you start manipulating things around, and I found out if I don’t have a tape recorder, often I would have a great idea, and if I didn’t have it recorded, or if I didn’t get it written down fast enough, it’s just gone. So, I can always refer to the tape recorder, get it, and write it down. I used to do that. I honestly don’t do it as much anymore because now we have computers. So, I can get things written down and saved.

Curington: You are at a Lutheran church. Have you always been at a Lutheran church?

Koepke: Yes, I’ve been in five Lutheran churches, worked in five.

Curington: In pretty much the same capacity in all five?

Koepke: Yes, sort of. At St. Stephen’s Lutheran in Cedar Rapids, I was also organist. I went to Trinity United Methodist and was organist. I went to St. John’s Episcopal, organist. I went to All Saints Catholic Church where I was also organist. When I went to St. Mark’s, I was just choir director. I would prefer that, although I love playing the organ.

Curington: You didn’t mention that you had any organ training.

Koepke: I had none. When I came to Cedar Rapids, I took the place of Tory Carlson, who became the music coordinator for the district. Tory Carlson was also the choir director at St. Stephen’s Lutheran. When Tory quit teaching at Jefferson, his wife retired her position at St. Stephen’s Lutheran. So, they were not just needing a choir director at St. Stephen’s Lutheran, they needed an organist, as well. The pastor who hired me asked, “Do you play organ?” I said, “No.” He asked, “Would you?” I said, “I don’t know anything about the organ. Nothing. I’ve never played one.” He said, “Would you like to try?” I said, “Well, I’ll give it a shot.” He said, “I’ll tell you what, let’s do this. Why don’t you do it for two months, and at the end of two months, we’ll meet, and you can say, ‘I don’t want to do this anymore,’ or I could say, ‘I don’t want you to do this anymore’? Or, we can decide that we are going to go on further.” So, I would go out to

the church, and I would work at it. One organist told me once, “You have the fastest left foot I’ve ever seen,” because I don’t pedal with both feet, just my left foot. He said, “I’ve never seen anyone play legato with one foot, and you seem to be able to do that.”

Curington: Hammond organ players typically play with the left foot.

Koepke: Yeah, they do. You’re right. Anyway, from 1967 until approximately 1990, I was an organist, and I got to be pretty good at it with my left foot. I enjoyed it.

Curington: Are all of these churches here in the Cedar Rapids area—St. Stephen’s, St. Mark’s, you mentioned a Catholic church. They are all here in Cedar Rapids?

Koepke: Yes, before that was Springfield Lutheran and Calmar Lutheran, when I was student at Luther. I went to Clear Lake, and I was choir director at First Congregational Church and the children’s choir director at Zion Lutheran, in Clear Lake. I moved to Cedar Rapids and went to St. Stephen’s Lutheran, and was there for seven years. Then, I went to Trinity United Methodist for five years maybe. Then, I went to All Saints Catholic Church. I then went to St. John’s Episcopal Church. St. John’s and St. Michael’s in Cedar Rapids merged and became Christ Episcopal, and then from there is where I am now, St. Mark’s.

Curington: What degrees do you hold?

Koepke: Music Education, Luther College, 1960. University of Minnesota, one summer session, and then finished at the University of Northern Iowa. I went summers. There were a lot of summers in which I didn’t go to school, but I got my Master’s in composition at UNI, 1967—Master’s of Arts with an emphasis in Composition. When I went to the University of Minnesota, I took composition there. I studied under Dominick Argento, a fairly big name in composition.

Curington: Yes, a fairly big name. I remember his “Gloria” that was an Iowa All-State piece some years ago.

Koepke: In fact, when I was a senior at Luther, we didn’t have composition. After my junior year, there were no more musical offerings. You could take music history, but the theory was done, the ear training was done, counterpoint was done. Everything was done. I went to Weston, and said, “I’m going into my senior year, and I’ve got nothing to do in music. This is weird. I’d be interested in composition. Why can’t we have a composition class?” He said, “I can’t have a composition class for one person. If you can round up some more people, maybe we can make that an offering.” So, I found, I think, four other people who agreed to become a class with me. Maurice Mondhardt, who was teaching at Luther at the time, who was a published composer, became our composition teacher. I wrote some things that year that I’m kind of proud of. Nothing that is published, and I don’t have any record of it. I wrote for brass choir—that I really liked. I won a composition contest with it. Since that time, I have forty-five hours

beyond the MA, but none of it is in the doctoral field. I've picked up classes here and there along the way, getting two-hours credit here and three-hours credit there. I went to several Norman Luboff Choral Associates Workshops. I had the opportunity to study with people like Eric Ericson. The hours helped me in terms of my contracts at Kirkwood because the hours helped me move further sideways in pay.

Curington: In your compositions with piano, what role do you assign to the piano?

Koepke: To be a partner with the singers rather than a redundancy. I try to write something that is a contrast to what the singers are doing. I don't want to just play what the singers are singing. To me, that's counterproductive. I want it to be interesting, and the piano, therefore, becomes the orchestra for the singers, and so I try to write countermelodies and rhythmic devices that are not the same as the singers are doing. Also, I think that the piano, or organ, sets up the opportunity to add stylistically more integrity to what you are trying to say, or just adds more color to the composition. The piano can again reflect what the text is talking about. Are you familiar with "And Nature Smiled"? There is a good example of the piano simply trying to be a background to that text that is developing. You get to that section where it says "Run run run from the horsetail."

Curington: I read that text out loud this morning as I was preparing for this interview. It's very powerful. Well done.

Koepke: I like "And Nature Smiled," If I was going to point to a piece that I really like. Talk about inspiration, I really was inspired with that text. I don't know where that text came from. Sometimes you get an idea from an experience that you had in real life that you either liked or something that really got to you. I think that with "And Nature Smiled," I think something really got to me. It has to do partly with discrimination, perhaps where this weed says "I want to be like a rose." And the rose says, "But you have value, you have value." That's what I tried to say. Don't try to be like somebody else. Just look deep inside yourself, and you're going to find some good stuff. That's what that song is all about.

Curington: I think that's why so many people love it. The message is so clearly written.

Koepke: In fact, Sigrid Johnson from St. Olaf was conducting in Kansas City and "And Nature Smiled" was on the reading list, and when they came to it, she said, "I want you all to take that one and put it at the very end." I wasn't there. I just heard this from somebody who was there. So they are getting to the end of the session now, and she said, "Okay, and the last song is 'And Nature Smiled' by Allen Koepke." She said, "But before we sing it, put your music down, I want to read the poem." She said, "Everybody close your eyes. I am going to read to you." She read the poem, and according to what Joan was telling me, at the end, there were a lot of people in tears.

Curington: I think anyone who does that particular piece should do exactly the same

thing. Let them just listen to the poetry, and then say that's why we are doing this. This is the chicken. This is what all of this music was written to support and enhance.

Koepke: That was preceded with "Dance on My Heart."

Curington: Which has another beautiful piano part.

Koepke: Yeah, it works. That was a reaction to the materialism in society. Where focus is put on how much money you've got; how much wealth you have; how much power do you have? So, that's why I created this little story about three gentlemen courting the fair young maiden, where the first two are offering her all sorts of riches. The third one comes along, and says, "You know what? I'll love you. I'll be true to you." What I've discovered is that really gets to the girls, that message. The girls love the piece because I think it's what they want. It's what the girls would like to have in a husband, and that's what's so appealing. I didn't write it so that it would appeal to the girls. I wrote it because I thought it had a text that needed to be stated. So many of the lyrics that we have in music today are such trashy lyrics, and all I'm trying to do is present a different point of view with mine. Are you familiar with "Speak to the Child of Love"? "What is love?" said a child to her mother. So, the mother explains. It's very effective.

Curington: What is the one thing that you studied that makes you most effective in your writing? Choose one from piano, composition, etc.

Koepke: Counterpoint. Because we were just talking about the responsibility of the piano to the singers, and the piano being a foil against what the singers are doing, and so much of that becomes contrapuntal, creating a secondary melody while the main melody is going on with the singers. That's what counterpoint is all about; it's counter melody. I love counterpoint. In fact, I've written a lot of songs in quodlibet. I just like playing one melody against another melody. That very first published song that I told you about, "Come Ye, Come All Ye People," I wrote in 1972, I decided I wanted to do "O Come All Ye Faithful." This was written as my finale to my program. In fact, I had a children's choir come from all of the grade schools in Cedar Rapids to participate, and they just sang the tune of "O come All Ye Faithful," and I had my women's choir join us. That was written as a small mixed ensemble, but it can be done with just the melody itself. Once I had the structure of "O Come All Ye Faithful" done, with the chord changes and where I needed to go, then I created the second song, which became the first song, the primary song, a very highly rhythmic thing, kind of modal, and you would never have a clue that became the background for "O Come All Ye Faithful." Jefferson High School has a copy of it, I'm sure.

Curington: Tell me about your family.

Koepke: I was married to my first wife in 1961. Her name was Kay Hoagland. We met when I was a senior and she was a freshman. I was in operas and plays. Theater is just a real love of mine. I love being an actor, and I like musicals. I was in a play by Truman

Capote called *The Grass Harp*, and Kay was my girlfriend in the play. I played the part of Collin Fenwick, kind of a sixteen-year-old juvenile delinquent. Well, we met in the play, and we fell in love. So, I graduated and went to Clear Lake, and she just left school then because we were engaged. She wasn't going to continue on at Luther for three more years while I was at Clear Lake, so she got a job in St. Paul at a hospital doing some secretarial work, and then that following summer we got married and moved to Clear Lake. I had four children with her. My oldest boy, Scott, is forty-eight-years old and is the manager of the Pioneer Co-op in Iowa City. It's a major downtown place. The students just love the place. It's called Natural Foods. Iowa City is a very "Eco" kind of town. They are into cleaning up the pollution and the earth. My son is really into that. He likes farming his own crops. If you go to any restaurant in Iowa City and get anything that has a pepper in it, then it probably came from my son's garden. He's on the board of several corporations. He's a brilliant person; so smart. He's not married. He doesn't want to get married, and hasn't got time for the responsibilities. He's so into everything that he's doing right now. He's very happy. My oldest daughter, Amy Hanisch, teaches in Cedar Rapids. She's also the conductor of the children's choir that sings for the Cedar Rapids Symphony. She's teaching right now at Coolidge Elementary. She was at Grant Wood, now she's at Coolidge, which was her grade school when she was growing up. It's called Discovery Chorus. She is something else. If you want to see someone handle large crowds of people... I don't know how she does it. She can have one-hundred and fifty or two-hundred people in front of her, kids, and they are all quiet and they all listen to her. She casts some sort of spell. She wrote a song. It was sort of the Cedar Rapids district school song. It was to be performed at the opening of the school year where all of the teachers get together. This was about five years ago. So she wrote this thing, and I worked with her because I had the software. So, she wrote the song, and I tweaked it a little bit for her, and then I printed it out. So, for the premier, she gathered together about thirty teachers and about a hundred students from Grant Wood Elementary, and they learned the song. She says to me, "Dad, would you come over and listen to our final rehearsal? Tell me what you think. If there is something we need to do differently or better, just tell me so." So, I watch her rehearse, and it's incredible what I am watching. I was very impressed with how she controls the rehearsal. So, we got all done, and she said, "Well, Dad, what did you think?" I said, "I'll tell you what I think. You sure taught me an awful lot today. That's what I think." I really meant it. Wow.

Curington: She has probably grown up watching you.

Koepke: Oh, I'm sure she did enough of that. Then, I have a daughter Ann Koepke. She was a grade-school teacher for fifteen years or more. She applied for a Fulbright Teacher Exchange seven or eight years ago with hundreds of other applicants, and she got it basically because she is such an incredible teacher. She was teaching first or second grade at Pierce Elementary in Cedar Rapids. I've seen her teach. You talk about spellbound. I don't know what my girls do to their classrooms. The kids are just hanging on every word. She is so fun, and she laughs. When she went to Pierce, all of the colors throughout the school were penitentiary gray and green. The insides of the classrooms were the same way. She goes in without asking anybody. She doesn't paint, but she's

got things all over the wall, and she brings in her own carpet. You walk into her room, and it's all bright reds and yellows and orange and fun. Her principal said, "Ann, you can't do that." And Ann said, "Why?" He said, "Well, we don't do it that way here." Ann said, "I can't teach in that kind of an environment. I want my students to have fun and enjoy the six hours that they have here." She's relentless, and did her thing. Bill Jacobson, who was my principal at Jefferson High School, became the superintendent of the Marion Independent School District. That's where Ann got her first job. Bill said, "She's one in a million. Just let her teach. Let her do her thing. Don't tell Ann how to do it; don't tell Ann what to do. Just let her teach." That's what he did in Marion. Then she went to Erskine Elementary in Cedar Rapids, and they wanted to bend Ann, and Ann got her way. Now, if you go back to Erskine and go through the classrooms, you see colors. In other words, Ann broke the mold there. She got a job in England. She and another woman switched jobs. Sarah came over here and took Ann's class, her car and apartment, the whole thing—they just switched. And, Ann had a fabulous time in England. She went to Trowbridge, which is right near Stonehenge. I went over there to see her, and it was a magnificent experience. So, Ann comes back from that experience, and a year or two later, a job opens up in Washington, DC, for the person who is the recruiter for the Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program. Ann applies for it. She loves to travel. She applied for the job, and got that job. So, she goes all over the United States just traveling. She goes to teacher conventions and sets up her booth, and talks to people trying to interest them in becoming a part of the Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program.

Curington: Tell me about your current wife.

Koepke: My current wife is named Sherril. The next anniversary will be our twenty-fifth. I was married to my first wife for twenty-four years. Sherril and I met... It was kind of strange—I was directing a semi-professional group in Cedar Rapids. We called ourselves Just for the Fun of It. That's how we got the name: we just gathered together, four guys and four gals. I played piano and sang. It was piano and eight singers. These were all good singers, all soloists in their own right. They would solo at appropriate spots and then sing ensemble when that was needed. They were smart, and we had a lot of fun together. We actually gathered together just for the fun of it. We weren't necessarily trying to make money off of it. When we were trying to think of a name, someone asked, "Why do we exist?" Someone else said, "I'm in it just for the fun of it." We all said, "There it is. That's the name of the group. Our introduction to audiences would be, 'And here they are, ladies and gentlemen, singing Just For The Fun of It.'" We were together for five years. We sang the same two-hour program over and over again, and after about two years... And then we said, "We've got to change programs, or we're not going to get invited anywhere anymore." So, we sang a second program, and at the end of that period of time, we all said, "You know what? This has been a great run, and I'm getting tired of lifting speakers onto tripods and carrying around heavy amplifiers and pianos and being gone having to rehearse." So, we finally said, "Let's end it on a really good note." We traveled all over to western Iowa and Des Moines. We were mostly around Cedar Rapids, but someone kept track, and I think we performed about one-hundred and fifty times over five years, so we were busy. We had to charge for it to pay off the sound

system and all. It also got to be somewhat expensive with the gas and costumes. We started charging, and people didn't have any problem paying for the shows. We were a very popular group. Anyway, the point is that one of our sopranos had to leave the group, and we needed to have someone come in who could just pick it up. One of the members said that she knew a woman who sang in the Follies who had a great voice. I said, "What's her name?" She said, "Sherril Reedy." I said, "All right. Why don't you ask her if she is interested?" She said, 'I've already talked to her. She is interested.' I said, "Tell her to come out to Kirkwood, and I will talk with her and interview her and have her sing a little for me." So, she came out and she was very attractive. I was already having some marital problems at the time. My wife and I were not doing well. So, she joined the group, and over the course of about the next two years, we fell in love and got married. She has three kids. Her oldest, Amy, has twin girls, and now she just had another baby, who is six months old. Chad is the one that's getting married down in Florida on September 4th, so we're going down there for that. They live in Fort Myers, and that's where Sherril and I would like to retire to. I love Fort Myers. I love Florida, but I love Fort Myers. Great place. Ryan is thirty. He's the baby. He has some mental health problems. He has epilepsy. He's right now at the Abbe Center in Cedar Rapids getting some help. We hope that he will be able to do some independent living soon and maybe get a job. He's had a tough life. He had to have brain surgery to help with his epilepsy. This has been real hard for him. We're hoping that gets better. Sherril's a music teacher. She teaches elementary music at College Community, one of the elementary schools. She's really good at what she does. So, my daughter is elementary music, and my wife is elementary music, so when those two get together, I just leave because they are just going a thousand miles an hour. They enjoy relating stories back and forth to each other. The other boy on the other side is Stephen. Stephen is my baby. He is a science teacher at Taft Middle School here in Cedar Rapids. He also coaches seventh- and eighth-grade basketball. He's also the golf coach at Jefferson High School, and this coming weekend, he will be defending his title at the Cedar Rapids Open. He's an incredible golfer. He knows how to hit a golf ball.

Curington: Have you got grandchildren?

Koepke: Yeah, I've got six. The seventh is on the way. Stephen's second child is due January 1st. They are all girls. I'm waiting for a boy.

Curington: Did you ever tell me your parent's names?

Koepke: My dad's name was Henry. My mother's name was Dorothy. My dad was a plumber. He left school after his sophomore year of high school, which was not all that uncommon back then. My dad had four brothers, one of them a twin. Only one of the brothers finished high school, but they all became extremely successful. The oldest brother is Ludwig. He owned the plumbing company that my dad was a part of as a journeyman (master) plumber. The next oldest, Uncle Frank, went into banking and eventually became the president of the Bankers of America. He was the man. He was also a volunteer at Fort Sheridan, north of Chicago. He was so esteemed that when he

died, I was in a funeral procession the likes of I have never seen in my life. Where the funeral began and where it ended at the cemetery, there was a military and a police escort. It was huge. It stopped traffic for miles around. The line was never ending. The mayors and generals and admirals were there. So, that was Frank. My uncle Garrett owned a five and dime store, very successful, Kopeke Five and Dime. My dad's twin brother worked for the Edison Company in Chicago.

Curington: So, all of those uncles were in the Chicago area?

Kopeke: All of them. They all stayed there, and all were very successful without a high school education, especially my uncle Frank, who became president of the Bankers of America. Oh, and my uncle Lud, he became the president of the Plumbers of America. So, two of the brothers went as far as they could go. Crazy. Getting back to my dad, my dad was a very bright man, and you would never know it unless you saw his work. His work was done to perfection. When he did a plumbing job, if he had to tear out a wall to replace fixtures behind the wall, when the job was over, if you look at the wall, it was always much better than the wall was to start with. He took pride in his work. I have so many memories of my father. He was such a hero to me. With music, he didn't know a quarter note from a half note, an A from a B, but he sang in the church choir. All he ever did was look at the words, because the notes meant nothing to him, but he had a tonal memory that was incredible. He would sit there with the music, and the choir director would play the bass part, and he knew it then, he knew the song. My mother was a good musician, a good piano player, good singer, soloist, directed the children's choir at our church. She was the one that got me going with piano.

Curington: Do you remember the name of the church?

Koepke: St. Timothy Lutheran. 2100 North Kildare Avenue, Albany, 24465. My mother was also the church secretary forever. She was responsible for putting my brother and I through college. All of the money she earned as the church secretary went into a fund that paid our tuition. That, and my work during the summers paid for college. I had some interesting jobs.

Curington: Do you consider yourself foremost a composer, teacher, or conductor?

Koepke: Teacher. I love being in the classroom. I just love it. In fact, I just wrote a letter yesterday that will be going out next week to all of the band, choir and orchestra directors at College Community, Jefferson, Kennedy, Washington, Linn Mar, Marion Independent, Xavier and Mt. Vernon informing them that I'm going to be a substitute teacher starting in the fall.

Curington: With all of those schools, you should work a lot.

Koepke: I hope so. In 1996, I had to quit teaching because of the cancer. I taught for thirty-six years, and there was never a day that I did not want to go to school. I loved

teaching, and when that was taken away from me, it was a real blow. For a while, partially because I wasn't feeling well, I can honestly say I didn't miss teaching at all. Now that I'm healthy again and I do a lot of clinic work where I go out and work with choirs, every time I get in front of that choir, that magic thing clicks in, you know. I think I have something valuable to give to the ensemble that I'm working with. When it's all over with, I think the kids feel good about my presence and I couldn't have been doing anything that I would have enjoyed more. So, the teacher is still in me. That has motivated me to get back into the classroom, but I have a secondary reason that's probably not as honorable but I'm moving to Florida in two years, maybe three. My present wife, Cheryl, will be retired. I love Florida, and she's going to love Florida. We're going to move to Fort Meyers; that's where Cheryl's oldest son lives. I just really love Fort Meyers, and my whole life I have wanted to own a boat. All of the money that I collect from substitute teaching is going to go into a special fund for the purchase of my boat. I hope that I still have enough health to be able to enjoy it. Anyway, I just finished conducting *The Producers*, a Theater Cedar Rapids production, this last spring. I don't know if you have ever seen *The Producers*?

Curington: Yes, I saw it on Broadway.

Koepke: It is the hardest book I've ever conducted. The thing is almost impossible. It's a nightmare. I hired a good orchestra comprised of symphony people and people who have their own bands. I had a good group, and it was very successful. It was the re-opening of the theater downtown that had been flooded out, now rejuvenated and remodeled. It was great. So, the conducting thing I like. I love conducting, but that's just kind of fun to do. I don't crave to conduct. I enjoy it when I'm doing it, but it's not something I have to do. I feel differently about teaching. Teaching is something I really have to do. That's why I still have a church choir because there is so much teaching that goes on with a church choir. The composing is probably a very, very close second to teaching. Composing is right up there. When I am composing, then everything else kind of goes into the background and composing goes to the top, and when I am done with the composition, composing slips back to the close second position. I become obsessed with a composition until it goes away. It usually takes me about a month to write a piece. Normally, not two hours in the front seat of my car listening to a ball game. That was a fluke. It's usually takes a month from the beginning of thinking about what it is I'm going to do until it's all printed out and ready to be sent.

Curington: What courses have you taught at the college level?

Koepke: At Kirkwood, concert choir, jazz choir. We did show choir for a couple of years, and I got rid of that and went to the jazz choir. I'm prejudiced about, this but I think show choir is great for high school. I don't think show choir has any place in college. I know the University of Iowa has the Old Gold Singers, and I know that Indiana has The Singing Hoosiers.

Curington: Nebraska had Scarlet and Cream Singers and now they have Big Red Singers.

Koepke: Yeah, and I get all of that. I think they are good public relations for the school and fun for the people who are participating in it, but when I compare singing in a jazz choir to singing in a show choir, it's comparing oranges and apples. There is so much musically to learn singing in a jazz choir. When you compare what you come away with musically, there is no comparison. The arrangements that show choirs sing are done purposefully and quite simplistically to lend to choreography. You can't sing sophisticated music while you are huffing and puffing all over the stage. So, I don't mean to condescend against show choir. I mean, I started the show choir phenomenon here in Cedar Rapids at Jefferson. It serves a great purpose, I think, for high schools. It has at least gotten the attention of kids. And now the television show *Glee* has taken the interest to another level. I just think that things like "High School Musical" are getting kids to consider being in the music program. They think "that show choir looks fun" or "being in a musical production—that looks fun." That's all good, but educationally speaking, I think jazz choir is the better of the two. I learned a great deal while directing a jazz choir. In fact, I went to two Phil Mattson workshops in 1983. I went to one up in Wisconsin, and I went to one in California because there was a lot to learn about the differences between a classical approach to singing and a jazz approach. It's very different and you have to learn the difference so that you don't hurt the voice. So, anyway, back to the question. I taught concert choir, jazz choir, theory, aural skills, and music appreciation.

Curington: No composition?

Koepke: Composition at Kirkwood was included as part of my theory class. Now, I have also been hired as adjunct faculty at Coe College and Mt. Mercy College to teach composition. Teaching composition is very difficult. I find it to be extremely difficult. There's almost no syllabus. You can create something, but it's too hard. It gets back to what I was saying when students would ask "How do you write music?" Well, you just start writing. How does one write a book? You need to know the subject. As the story evolves, are you going to create characters to serve the book? It's too hard, and it's going to be different from one song to the next.

Curington: Do students who don't "get it like you get it" frustrate you? You understand the process. You have perfect pitch and piano skills. Those are two huge tools that you have that help you with the process of composing. Also, you are an idea person. When students are in your classes and have come to you not equipped with all of those tools or only possess one of them, is that frustrating?

Koepke: It's not for me. It's frustrating for them and it doesn't take long for them to recognize that as much as they like the idea of being a composer, they are not one. I remember Jim Kimmel. You know Jim, don't you?

Curington: Of course I know Jim.

Koepke: I remember Jim saying this about composers: there are many of people who can write a good piece of music, and that's it. Just as there have been a lot of people who have written one good book, and that was it.

Curington: One hit wonders.

Koepke: One hit wonders, yeah. There's Margaret Mitchell. *Gone with the Wind* is a great book. It's the only book she ever wrote. Then you have Irving Berlin who's got a thousand songs published, all written in the key of C. Seriously.

Curington: I did not know that. That's hilarious.

Koepke: That's how he wrote them, and then he had somebody else transpose. He only understood C, and his fingers would only work in the key of C. Seriously.

Curington: Do you have favorite keys?

Koepke: I don't think so.

Curington: So, when you start writing, you don't immediately go to E-flat? You just go to wherever it started in your head?

Koepke: Since most my music is choral music, within an hour; I will kind of have an idea of what my principal melody is going to be and its breadth. Okay, how high or how low is that melody going to go? I try to write as much as I can within a 10th, melodically. It will stretch above and below, but mostly I try to keep the tessitura in that area. That will then determine whether it's in E or E-flat, or D, or C, or F. There are certain keys that sound different. Sharp keys usually have brighter sounds. It depends upon whether it is a major key, minor key, or modal. It depends upon whether it is being written on keyboard, or not. Keyboardists tend to like flat keys better than sharp keys. If you say to a keyboardist, "I'm going to write this in E-flat or E. Which do you prefer?" Nine out of ten keyboardists will say E-flat. How about A or A-flat? Even though A-flat has got four flats compared to three sharps, most of them will prefer A-flat, and of course, B or B-flat is a no brainer. For me it doesn't make any difference, none at all. I am as comfortable playing in six sharps as I am playing in two flats, I don't care.

Curington: When you finally decide on the key, some consideration has been given to keys accompanists prefer?

Koepke: Yeah, that's what I'm saying. The first thing is to decide what key is best for the song, and if it's, for instance, A or A-flat and if it doesn't make any difference, then I'll go with a flat. Even as a singer, there is a difference between, let's say, F or F-sharp. F is a note that sopranos can sing with ease, but F-sharp all of a sudden starts becoming problematic. So, that one half step means a lot. However, what about the key of G? Are you going to expect the sopranos to sing a high G? But, what about singing a high A?

This is a big difference. So, that's part of it, and it depends on how often they sing that note, and how long they hold the note. These are all things that you take into consideration. You have to tweak it here and there a little bit. If I am writing something that is in E-flat or E, and it's a bright cheery song, it's going to be in E. If it's a minor song, E-minor is a common key, but I think it's about convenience more than anything else. I mean, one sharp—anybody can handle one sharp. If you move it to E-flat, if it's a minor key, E-flat is going to sound more "minorish" than E probably. Then you are dealing with the relative major of G-flat, and now all of sudden that's the same F-sharp major. Now you're dealing with a lot of black keys, and people would prefer one black key over six black keys. So, those are all things that you tweak at the end when you are all done while you are winding everything up. You go back, and you say, "Is this the best it can possibly be?" I edit and re-edit probably a dozen times after I've said I'm done. Then something nags on me, so I'll go back and add another passing tone in the bass to make the voice leading better. All of the little details that suddenly start to come out, such as a dotted eighth to a sixteen rhythm would be more fun than two eighth notes. So, you start messing with that. Then one day comes, and you say, "That's it. It's done." It's kind of hard to let go of a piece of music knowing that "it is what it is" now. I'm not cavalier about it. I really investigate everything that I've done to make sure it's exactly what I want. Sometimes I question whether I have given enough information in the piece to the choir director so that he/she will do it the way that I want him/her to do it. Should I put a crescendo right here, or should I assume that the choir director know enough to put a crescendo there? If you start putting every single thing in, the piece will be so cluttered up with so much information that it will look terrible and confusing. So, you hope that the choir director knows enough to say, "You know what, this phrase is moving forward and melodically the peak is right here." Aren't they going to understand that you want a little crescendo there? Sometimes though you can't take the chance, and you write the crescendo and the diminuendo.

Curington: Sometimes, they ignore it anyway.

Koepke: You know the students will. How many times have I said to my church choir, "You know, I'm paid a lot of money to point out things in your music"?

Curington: When did you arrive at Kirkwood?

Koepke: 1980.

Curington: The same year you wrote "Praise the Name of God with a Song."

Koepke: That's the year it was published. I wrote the song in 1979. In fact, I didn't know at the time that was my last Jefferson High School choir. I wrote it in September of 1979. We performed it probably in October or November, and then I sent it off to Jim Kimmel at Jensen, and they published it, and it came out in '80.

Curington: So, what do you like about Kirkwood?

Koepke: Oh, it's a great school. I like everything about it.

Curington: Give me some highlights.

Koepke: No TA. You sign up for an instructor, and that's who you get. You don't sign up for Mr. or Dr. So-and-so and then have a pimply faced nineteen-year-old standing in front telling you all about life. That's not going to happen. If it says that I'm the professor, that's who you're going to get. That's important. I think that Kirkwood is extremely student-caring. They really go out of their way to help you and guide you and work with you on your program; to develop it so that everything is going to be in your best interest. When you leave Kirkwood and go to "college x," that you are all set for "college x." Everything that you take is transferable. Kirkwood is one of only twenty community colleges in the United States, and there are fifteen-hundred community colleges, twenty of them belong to the League for Innovation. It's a great honor to be in League for Innovation because it basically says that it's a school on the cutting edge of new ideas and that it's a school that puts programs in place that work. Kirkwood has been a member of the League from the year of its inception. You have to be voted into the League and re-voted in. It's not an automatic thing. This says something about the school and adds a lot of integrity to what we do. I taught there for sixteen years. There is congeniality and a good spirit there. A college professor of mine, Charles Matheson, who used to be the choral director at UNI, one day asked me, "What is it that you want to do with the rest of your life?" I said, "I'd like to be a college professor." He said, "Why?" I said, "Because I want an opportunity to work with more talented people. I can do more things." He said, "Well, that's true, but there is a price to pay." I said, "I don't understand. Tell me what the price is." He said, "One of the difficulties of working in most universities and colleges is that there is a competition that develops between members of the department. Sometimes, there is animosity between the choir director and the voice faculty." He pointed out how "nuts" it can be. He said, "It's not a pleasant environment. The really talented student who is a great oboe player, but also is a coloratura soprano, there are people fighting for that person. They will say you can't do both; a choice has to be made. In high school, you don't have to deal with that. They can be in the band and they can be in the choir. They don't have to make a choice." He said, "At high school, if you've got a good program going, the kids will always let you know that they are excited. There's a spirit that you can't quench. Sometimes, you have to hold it down a little bit, but it's there, and the kids are very unsophisticated in their response to how meaningful music is to them. At college they may enjoy what they are doing, but sometimes you don't even know it. They become almost cynical about it. It becomes like a job, rather than something that is exciting to do." I see that working with professional musicians.

Curington: It's funny when people get to college; it's usually the first time when people begin to say that they need to rest their voices. They sometimes protest singing in a choir altogether, forgetting that choir was their first musical love and where they started.

Koepke: That's exactly right. So, anyway, Charles Matheson, I think he was pretty much on target. He said, "If you like what you're doing at high school, stay in high school, and that you can fulfill a lot of your ambitions, these better choirs you want to work with in other ways. So, you can't do the St. John's Passion. Is it worth it? The day after you do the St. John's Passion, it's done, it's in the past." He had a lot of good things to say. Without being cynical, he was just being practical. I didn't see that at Kirkwood. Maybe they don't want to be sophisticated like a major university. Please know I'm not putting major universities down.

Curington: What software program do you use?

Koepke: I hate to admit it. I'm still doing Encore.

Curington: I just knew you were going to say Finale.

Koepke: Well, here is the big debate that has been going on now for three years. I'm going to change. I have to change, and it's either going to be Sibelius or Finale. I know that Finale is the standard of the industry. I know that, and if I talk to any of my publishers, they are going to say, "Please do Finale, please." Then I talk to people who are writing, and they say to forget about Finale; Sibelius is so much more friendly and to do Sibelius. Tim Hankewich, who is the conductor of the Cedar Rapids Symphony, has both. He says when he has something to write and print out, he always goes to Sibelius because he can get it done faster. Every summer he says he needs to get back to Finale because he doesn't want to forget it. After he then works with Finale, he realizes how easy Sibelius is. I asked Jerry Owen—good composer from Cedar Rapids—what he uses—Sibelius. I asked why not Finale? He said Sibelius was just more friendly and easier to use. I've been around now for three years trying to make a decision, so what happens is, somebody contacts me and says, "I want to commission you to write a piece for us, and I'd like to have it in about two months, if I can." What do I do? Do I write it on Encore and get it done, or do I go to Finale or Sibelius and then have to learn the program while I'm trying to compose it? So, I keep going back to Encore, and it's driving me crazy. Right now, I don't have a commission. That doesn't happen very often. I usually have some commissions stacked up, so what should I be doing? I should be learning Finale or Sibelius. I'm instead taking wallpaper off my walls because we're going to be moving in two years, and I've got nine rooms that have wallpaper. Have you ever removed wallpaper? It's horrible. You want to scream while you are doing it. I've been working with Encore now for twenty years. There is nothing on Encore that I have to learn. I just start, and even if I haven't worked in it for six months, I can go back to it and it's just like getting on a bicycle.

Curington: I will be intrigued to find out what your decision is. Which would you say are your most successful compositions?

Koepke: "Praise the Name of God with a Song," "Dance on My Heart," "And Nature Smiled," "Wade in de Water." Those are probably the four most successful. Because

“Wade in de Water” has been sung by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. Have you heard the recording of the Brigham Young University Choir? It’s an unbelievable recording. I listened to it, and it was one of those moments—Whoa, did I write that? It’s done so well. It’s so flattering to the composer. It’s a little like when Bruce Chamberlain was at UNI. He called me one day, and said, “You’ve got to come up to a concert.” The Seoul University Women’s Choir was doing a concert at a church in Waterloo. He really thought I needed to go up to hear that program. He said, “You’ve got to come up and hear it, and I don’t want to tell you why, just come up.” I kept pushing it and pushing it because it was winter and roads weren’t good. He said, “They’re doing one of your pieces. The director, whose last name was Parks, and his choir would like to meet you.” I asked what piece it was they were doing, and he said, “*And Nature Smiled*.” So, I went up there. They were rehearsing for the concert, and I walked into the rehearsal room, and they didn’t know who I was, and so he just looked up, and since he didn’t know me, he just went back to the rehearsal. At a convenient moment, Bruce Chamberlain said, “Dr. Parks, I would like to introduce to you Allen Koepke.” All of these women turned around. They gave me the typical Asian greeting. They were all dressed in these white gowns that were gorgeous. It was like looking at thirty-five angels. They were beautiful. They were all looking at me in awe. It was crazy. So, I just said hello and that I was looking forward to the concert. I sit down in the congregation, and realize the whole program is all European music. It included Palestrina, Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Haydn and the like and Allen Koepke. This is crazy. They start singing, and it is by far the best women’s ensemble I have ever heard. They sing with such precision and such beauty. The tone, the matched vowels, the expression, everything about it was better than I’d ever heard. Then, they get to my song, which is next to the last, and they start singing, and the tempo is much slower than I wrote it. I went, “Oh God, they’ve killed my song.” They kept singing, and I thought it was going to be awful, and it was just sensational. They got done with it, and I had tears. I could hardly keep it together. It was just gorgeous. He sent me a recording of it, too. In fact, they named the recording “*And Nature Smiled*.” In fact, it’s called “*The Nature Smiled*.” Someone in Korea didn’t quite get it right. I got a letter from Dr. Park about a year ago. He is an amazing choir director. From time to time I’ll search my name in Google to see what’s going on out there. I find out which choirs are recording my music. There are a lot of recordings out there

Curington: I know Missouri All-State has a nice recording of “Wade in de Water.”

Koepke: Yes, they do. Iowa has a pretty good recording of “Wade.” Texas has an excellent recording of “Wade.” So, they are out there. The royalties are doing well. The last couple of things I have in the Santa Barbara catalogue are “Follow the Drinking Gourd.” Have you seen that?

Curington: I’ve ordered it. I haven’t seen it yet, but I have heard it.

Koepke: Who did you hear sing it?

Curington: I don’t know. I was on the J.W. Pepper website and listened to the choir they

have linked to the piece.

Koepke: I've got a new recording of "Veni, Veni Emmanuel."

Curington: Yes, and I've heard that, too, on Youtube.com. Beautiful.

Koepke: It turned out well. Have you seen "'Zekiel"? It's my arrangement of "E'Zekiel Saw the Wheel." Make sure you get that one.

Curington: Yes. I must have heard it on J.W. Pepper's website as well, and I will get it. Now, of all of your compositions, of which would you say you are the most proud?

Koepke: The one I'm most proud of is *Missa Brevis*. That's Hinshaw. That's a thirteen-minute full symphony orchestra and choir piece. Without a doubt, that's my crowning achievement. That was a commission written for the University of Northern Iowa for their Carnegie Hall appearance. I love the thing. That sounds like an egocentric thing to say again, but I just love listening to it. *Missa Brevis* is another piece that when I listen to it, I can't believe I wrote it. It's very sophisticated, and it's difficult. It's been performed here at the Cedar Rapids Symphony. I went down to Culver-Stockton College in Missouri and heard a performance. They asked me to come down to meet the choir and the orchestra.

Curington: Do you have recordings?

Koepke: I have a recording of the *Missa Brevis*. I should be able to find that. Like I said, I am a terrible bookkeeper. I don't know why, but once I have done something, it's just done.

Curington: Twenty years ago, didn't you know I was going to be asking these questions in 2010?

Koepke: If it weren't for wallpaper right now, I probably would have done something about it. Tom Lippert—You know Tom?—Tom commissioned me to write a piece for his choir down in St. Petersburg, Florida, and I went down and directed their choir in a music festival last February, or a year ago February. He wanted to do a lot of my music, so he asked for a packet. My wife has been accumulating a lot of my music over the years. So, I sent him that packet, which he chose from, and then he sent it back. I don't know where that packet is, and my wife doesn't know that I don't know where the packet is. She'll kill me if I can't find the packet. So, I've got some digging to do. It's in my house some place. It's in the office some place. I've just got to find it. But, I've got the *Messa Brevis* in there, and I've got a recording of it. It's a pretty good recording. The Cedar Rapids Concert Chorale and the symphony did it, and it's done pretty well. It was recorded here in Cedar Rapids, but it was premiered at Carnegie Hall. They did it with the University of Northern Iowa Choir and a choir from another country.

Curington: What motivates you to get up in the morning?

Koepke: “I’ve got to pee” is probably the real answer, but I love the morning. I really love the morning. Especially during the summer. I make a pot of coffee, and I go out on my screened-in back porch, where it’s usually around sixty five or seventy degrees in the early morning, and sit out there and get my newspaper and do the crossword puzzle and all of the other interesting things and read the sports page, read the editorial page, read the front page, eat my breakfast, do my e-mail, and that’s all before anybody else gets up. I usually get up at 4:00 or 4:30. When I am writing, that’s when I start writing. My mind is fresh in the morning. I usually write until 11:00 or noon, and then I quit. Now, if I’m really on something, I’ll keep going, but usually after writing for about four hours, my mind starts to get a little weary and I feel like I need a rest.

Curington: You seem to have a knack for composing spirituals. My question is where did that come from?

Koepke: A lot of people think I’m Black. I’m serious. I’ve had people call me that I don’t know, and after we’ve talked, they ask, “Well, you are Black, aren’t you?” I go, “No I’m not,” and they ask, “Well, how can you write Black spirituals the way you do without being Black?” I grew up loving spirituals. I just love them. There is something intrinsically exciting about listening to a spiritual. I really understand the spiritual. I get it. So, when I write, I’m just writing what I love and what I know. I like Bach. If someone said, “Write a good Baroque piece,” I could write a good Baroque piece. I like Mozart. I could do that because I understand the style. I get it. It’s the same thing with the spiritual. Do I want to write a Baroque piece? Not on your life. That’s been done and much better than I’d be able to do it. The same thing goes for writing a Classical piece. I can’t write as well as Mozart. Why even give it a shot? I have written some original spirituals—“Lord, I Wanna Climb, But I Keep Slippin’ Away.” That’s an original. I don’t write very many arrangements, but I write arrangements of spirituals. “E’Zekiel Saw The Wheel”—that’s a great arrangement, but that’s all you ever hear is that one arrangement, and I love the piece so much that I decided to give it my own flavor. I decided to write “Zekiel” for Wartburg College. I wanted to present an alternative to what everybody knows. It probably is never going to be as popular, but at least there is an outside chance that it will be appreciated for what it is.

Curington: Well, I’ve got to tell you that I first heard “Wade in de Water,” without the opportunity of looking at the sheet music, and as I tried to speculate who the composer was, lots of names came to mind, and yours was not one of them. After finding out it was you, you have to know that I was very intrigued with the idea that you had written this piece and that you had captured the spirit of the spiritual so well with “Wade in de Water.”

Koepke: An interesting aside on “Wade in de Water”: I wrote that in a room in St. Louis. My stepson has got epilepsy, and he was down there having some brain surgery. We are down in the Ronald McDonald House for one month while he was having brain surgery

and recovering from that. So, we would go to see him, and then there wasn't anything else to do, so I'd go back to the Ronald McDonald House, and I had brought along a little keyboard and a lot of paper. I was down there for a month, and during that month, I wrote "Wade in de Water," in the Ronald McDonald House in St. Louis, Missouri. Oh, I didn't have any music paper. I forgot. I didn't have any with me, so I wrote it on napkins. The whole thing was on napkins and regular paper. I would scratch out a staff, and I would write some things in. The problem was I had all of these ideas, but I didn't have them in any order. So, when I got home to my computer, it was like a puzzle putting all of the parts together that I had already written in St. Louis. That's how that whole thing unfolded. The one thing that I regret—and I don't know why I did it—I put in these connecting phrases: "Wade in the water children, children wade." There are two of those, but each one is different, and I have had choir directors say, "You drive us crazy because you wrote it one way here and you wrote it differently over there." They ask, "Why did you do that?" I say, "I don't know," and if I were to do it all over again, I wouldn't have done that.

Curington: Do you ever go through periods where you find it difficult to write?

Koepke: No. Never. Here is an interesting thing—there are times when I'm writing and there is no way I know what that next measure's going to be. I hit a brick wall. Here's the neat part, and it has never failed me—I'll get to a place and I won't know what that next note is. I struggle with it, and I work at it, and I can't get beyond this place, and that's when I say, "Bye bye, see you tomorrow." I come back tomorrow or the next day, and I get the answer immediately. It happens every time. It's a matter of sleeping on it and letting my brain sort it all out. It's cool. I almost laugh when it happens because I'll come back to my computer and I'll play my piece right up to where I stopped, and I know what's got to be next, and then I just keep on going. That has never failed me. That is so cool when it happens. The mind just keeps going. You might go to sleep, but the mind is still wrapped around that thing, and I can count on it. So, when I leave it, I'm not frustrated at all because I know that tomorrow I'll have it.

Curington: What would you say your style of writing is, if you have one?

Koepke: It's just eclectic. If you heard the *Missa Brevis*, I also wrote another piece called *Te Deum*. I wrote it for a church in Dallas, Texas. *Missa Brevis* is very similar to the *Te Deum*. *Te Deum* has never been published, but it is in a similar style as the *Missa Brevis*.

Curington: Is it about the same length?

Koepke: Yes. In fact, if somebody wanted to do something—of course, I don't have it published. That's the problem—but if somebody wanted to do something, they are both about twelve or thirteen minutes in length, so you have a nice half of a program if you put them back to back. They are different enough that it would work. It's not like hearing Bach and Bach and more Bach. There is a style change. You can go from something like the *Missa Brevis*, which is pretty sophisticated and kind of way out there, it's tough and

contemporary, then you can go to a piece called “Love” that I wrote for choir and piano and children’s choir. It’s another quodlibet piece that I did where I used the Corinthians love scripture that you hear at weddings all the time. Then, I go back and do the repeat, and during the repeat they sing what they just heard, but then you hear “Jesus Loves Me, This I Know.” It’s very effective. It really works well, and it’s very simple. It’s not sophisticated at all unless you consider quodlibet to be sophisticated, but it’s just a technique.

Curington: Do you consider your catalogue largely for church or more for secondary education or college?

Koepke: Largely church music. You sort of write for what is expedient for the moment, a little bit like Bach, where if he didn’t have the job that he had at the time—Handel—same thing. For me, it’s been kind of the same thing. Piece that I wrote when I was writing mainly for maybe a school choir—But there are other times that I was really writing for my church choir. It just vacillates. Sometimes I go heavy on one or the other. I have written a lot of secular music, like “Dance on My Heart” and “And Nature Smiled,” and although it’s secular music, there is spirituality about the pieces. It’s not about God or Jesus, but there is something that borders the spiritual or the ethical in those pieces. Hinshaw is basically a publishing house that does church choir. That’s basically what they do. Although one of my pieces that I have written, “I Listened”... It was commissioned by Linn Mar High School when they presented a concert at ACDA in Madison. It is secular, and that’s one of the few things that I think Hinshaw has published from me that is not a sacred piece. Likewise, Santa Barbara right now is pretty much publishing secular music. The exception to that will be the spiritual, which can sell to both schools and churches. In fact, I get more school sales than churches because most of my spirituals are 8-part and unaccompanied. Lately, I have written a lot of SSAATTBB pieces. I like writing a cappella. For one, there is a purity about it that appeals to me. The second thing is that a cappella singing is very popular right now. I like writing 8-part because the harmonic opportunities are much more expansive than SATB. The disadvantage is that you are cutting down your potential sales, and publishers don’t like that. Publishing houses will say stay away from the following: a cappella, sacred, and divisi, and all of my pieces are all of the above. It’s still selling rather well, so they are relenting on that a little. They would rather have me write an SATB piece that’s secular and accompanied. That’s what they want. Barbara Harlow at Santa Barbara has often said, “Why don’t you write another ‘Dance on My Heart’?” I don’t know if I can capture the charm of “Dance on My Heart” again. She said, “Write a sequel.” I’ve thought about it, but nothing is coming to me.

Curington: I have seen where composers borrow from themselves that way. They sometimes borrow the formula that worked so well in another one of their pieces, and when people sing the new piece they realize that the composer borrowed from him/herself. I think “Dance on My Heart” is just fine without a sequel.

Koepke: I don’t really have any inclination to want to write a sequel to it or something

like it. I think that publishers are very often thinking about the profit margin more than anything else, and they are perhaps thinking that maybe since “Dance on My Heart” was so successful, if you write something else like it, why wouldn’t that be as successful? I think you have got a good point; people might look at the piece and say this is another “Dance on My Heart.” Why would I want to do that?

Curington: What role do you think choral music plays in the modern church? Are church choirs going away in the traditional sense? Are things moving towards contemporary?

Koepke: I suppose the answer is yes.

Curington: In short, the music that you write that is mostly sacred for settings, such as traditional church worship services, in thirty years, will there be many choirs to sing them?

Koepke: That’s a good question. The reality is that, and this is just my opinion now, I think church is becoming a bit of a show place with too much show, and I think we are losing the liturgy of the past. I don’t know if that’s all bad or not. When I think about what Martin Luther did—When he broke away from the Roman Catholic Church, one of the things that he wanted to do was to change the participation amongst the parishioners. Because, up until then the members of the church would go to church and a lot of them just stood. There weren’t even pews, so they would stand in this open space and listen to a choir sing some motet, listen to a lot of liturgy, do some responses with the liturgy, pray, and go home. There was no congregational singing except for responses. That was it. Luther came a long and said he wanted to have them respond, but since the people didn’t know any songs, he took the folk music of the day, bar songs—In fact, “A Mighty Fortress is Our God,” that melody is a tavern song—he just changed the words. I think of “Danny Boy.” How many arrangements have there been now with sacred words to ‘Danny Boy’? So we’re not doing anything that much different than what happened years ago. Martin Luther wanted to bring the popular music of the day into the church. The popular music of today is not Bach and Palestrina and Mozart. That’s not the popular music of the day. The popular music of the day is what you hear in the top 40, or whatever. So, now we have Christian radio, and what are they singing on Christian radio? Bach motets? No.

Curington: They are singing Chris Tomlin and Michael W. Smith.

Koepke: Exactly. What is that like? Pop music. It’s the same thing, except the words are about Jesus and God. I think that’s what we are moving toward. There are the hard-core bunch that has to hang onto that traditional service and liturgy. It’s precious. How about our hymn books, which are loaded with all sorts of great songs, great texts? Are we just going to leave all of that and bury it? I don’t know. I hope not. The pendulum keeps going back and forth. It will come back. It’s got to come back. Traditional worship has got to come back. I don’t know when it’s going to happen, and I don’t know how strong it’s going to be. But, it will come back. We are doing all we can at St. Mark’s Lutheran

Church to prop up and hold high our traditional service, but we are being outdistanced right now with contemporary Christian music. Here is what I told a choir director in Cedar Rapids about three years ago. He asked, “How can you stand doing that contemporary Christian stuff? How can you stand it?” I said, “I’m going to ask you a question, and you need to answer this. It’s Sunday morning, and this man has got to make a decision. Is he going to go play golf, or is he going to go to church? OK? If he’s going to go to church, what’s going to draw him to want to go to church rather than play golf? It’s got to be something that he is going to be attracted to and enjoy. Is he going to be attracted to and enjoy a good Palestrina Motet, or contemporary Christian music? The likelihood will be that there will be something about watching guitars and a band and having some music that’s got a good beat and an attractive melody that has a nice hook, something that he can sing along with rather than just hear the choir sing that will appeal to him. What’s he going to prefer, or what would you prefer he—do be in church, or be on the golf course? Answer me.” He said, “I’d rather that they be in church.” So, that’s what contemporary Christian music appears to be doing right now. It’s attractive and it’s a show, but it’s getting people to church.

Curington: It’s attracting more people than the traditional worship services all over America.

Koepke: All over, and you know that the churches that are becoming blue-haired old churches are people who refuse to buckle into contemporary singing. Those churches are going by the way side. I remember being in Denmark in 1979. I took a choir over to the Copenhagen Youth Festival. For one week, I was in Copenhagen, and the other week, we had host parents. We lived in a little farmhouse or country house outside of town. We were going to church on Sunday morning, and they had three children in their house, and the three children were not going to church. I said, “Do you mind if I ask, why are your children staying home?” “Oh, they don’t like church, so we don’t make them go.” So, we went to church, and it was a big, old, stone Renaissance kind of church that probably sat a thousand people, and that morning there were about twenty-five or thirty people at church and they were all old, old people. On our way home, I said, “What’s going on? Why isn’t anybody at church?” She said, “You want to know where they are?” I said, “Yeah.” She said, “Okay, I will show you.” So, we went home a different route, and we went past a soccer stadium. Sunday morning. 50,000 people. They said that the people would rather be watching soccer than going to church. You know, I went to that church service, and it was “snoresville.” It was just boring. It was a traditional service at its worst. There was nothing interesting about it. No wonder those kids didn’t want to go to church. The other thing was that there weren’t any young people there. Why would three teen-aged kids want to go to church and be the only three kids in the church? They don’t have contemporary worship. At least they didn’t in 1979. I don’t know what it’s like over there now. It might be different now. But, it comes back to my point I was making to this choir director here in Cedar Rapids: Is what would you prefer them be in—church on Sunday morning, or being on the golf course? He said, “In church.” I said, “There is your answer. Whether you like contemporary Christian music or not, it’s getting people to church. So, you don’t like the music. So what? They are getting the

Gospel, they are getting a sermon, guidance, they are getting so much rather than being frustrated about how well they're hitting the golf ball." He said, "You know what? You're right." When he said you're right, that was a big achievement.

Curington: What do find to be the place of choral music in secondary education?

Koepke: From the very humanistic point of view, it's one of the performing arts. If we're going to dissolve choral music, then we better also dissolve orchestral music and band music because there is no difference. We just happen to use words. So, now the question is what about those words? In our secular society that we see around us right now, are the words going to be taken to be offensive? Are we going to bow down to people who are non-believers who can't stand the thought of singing in a public school words of religious nature? This hasn't happened in Cedar Rapids. I can't think of one instance where any high school in Cedar Rapids has been reprimanded by anyone for singing sacred music. Now, that's unusual, and I know that. I think all of the choir directors in this area, and maybe throughout Iowa, are thankful that we have people in this state who will at least tolerate the singing of sacred music, if for no other reason than it's part of a choral tradition, if nothing else. When people used to ask me, "How do you get around doing this?" My answer would be that at the high school level, I'm not trying to convert anybody to Christianity. That's not my purpose. I am just there to allow my students to sing some good choral literature, and they happen to find lyrics helpful in their walk in life, great. But, that is not why I do it. I'm not having them sing the Mozart "Ave Verum Corpus" for them to become close to God by singing the piece. We don't sing a spiritual in our school in order to raise our hands and praise Jesus. That's not why we are doing it. Spirituals are a part of our heritage. Like it or not, that's American music. While we are singing a spiritual, we are learning the roots of African music, the roots of Spanish music because Spain greatly influenced the singing of Africans. Everything is an amalgamation. We just pass things around.

Curington: The analogy that I normally use is that we teach our kids history and we teach our kids about Hitler, but we don't expect them to all of a sudden become Nazis because we have exposed them to Nazism.

Koepke: That's right, and that's very good. I will use that, if you don't mind.

Curington: I didn't come up with that, but it is the best analogy that I have heard.

Koepke: So, I think we have an obligation to present our students in schools with a good representation of good choral music, whether it was written in 1900, 900, or something that was written last year. If it is good music, let's do it.

Curington: What do you think the major trends are in choral music in the last thirty years?

Koepke: One trend I have already mentioned is a cappella singing. There are a lot of

composers who pretty much compose just for a cappella. I don't do that, but I do write a lot of *a cappella* music.

Curington: You mentioned that the publishers are asking for certain things. That has to have some kind of influence on trends.

Koepke: I'm going to tell you a story. I was in Minneapolis somewhere in the mid '80s. I was at a reading session, and we were going through some horrible church music. It was offensive and poor. I just walked out, and I went into the hallway where there were rows of publishing houses with their music out there. I thought, well, I'm not going to get it in there, so I'm just going to start looking through the stacks. So, I'm out there looking, and this man is out there. I didn't know who he was, and I'm kind of mumbling and grumbling with a bad attitude. He said, "How you doing?" I said, "I'm doing okay." He said, "You seem upset." I said, "I am." He said, "Are you a choir director?" I said, "Yes, I am. I thought I was going to come up here and find some good choir music for my church, and it's frankly a bunch of crap that I am listening to and seeing." He said, "I'm sorry to hear that. Do you write music?" I said, "Yes I do." He said "Well, what have you written?" So I said, "A couple of things: 'Praise the Name of God with a Song' and 'Come All Ye People,' and a lot of music I've written for my church choir because I can't find good church choir music, so I write it." He said, "Why don't you send some to me? I'm Brian Busch, Chief Choral Editor for Belwin-Mills." I had just called his music crap. He said, "Do you have some things ready?" I said, "Yes." He said, "Send it to me." That began my relationship with Belwin-Mills, which became Columbia Pictures Publications Belwin, which became Columbia Music, and is now Alfred Music. So, if you want to get my church choir music that is in print, now you go to Alfred Music because they've got the rights to that music, most of which is no longer being published. I still have things like "Risen Alleluia," "And then He Died," it's a Good Friday piece that became very popular. "Risen Alleluia" is an Easter piece with brass that has gotten a lot of mileage for me. Those two pieces especially, I'm still getting royalties from those. Getting back to Brian Busch—So, I start sending him music. I have five Lenten pieces that I had my church choir sing. They took all five of them. I put them together into one binder for my own church choir at St. Mark's. So, now it's just called "Five Lenten Pieces." I'll send you a packet with the "Five Lenten Pieces" in it. They are all a cappella, all four part, all very simple. So, back to Brian. He is saying, "Send me the stuff." I sent it in, and suddenly I'm getting published one after the next. Within a year, I've got approximately fifteen pieces being published by Columbia Pictures. Then I sent him something, and he went, "No, not this time." I don't remember what the piece was, but it was I thought one of my better pieces. I called him, and said, "Brian, what's the deal with this piece?" He said, "I love the piece, I love it, but we are not going to get enough sales on it." I said, "Is that what this is all about?" He said, "Absolutely." I said, "So, the quality of the music doesn't mean anything. It's how well is it going to sell and make money for your business." He said, "Now you've got it." I said, "Oh, Brian, I am so disappointed to hear this." They were at that time trying to put together a new part of the industry called the educational wing because up until that time they had published virtually exclusively church music. Now they were trying to get into the school market.

I said, “Are you doing this for educational reasons, or for the money, Brian?” He said, “The money.” I said, “Okay. One more question. I’m Johann Sebastian Bach, and I’ve got a new piece that I have just written that I think is going to really be something great, and I am going to put it on your desk. Oh, it’s called the B-Minor Mass, and I want to know if you’re going to publish it or not.” He says, “Nope.” I said, “Why?” He said, “Not enough people are going to be able to buy it. There is not enough interest in the song. I can put out a sketchy little church choir anthem, and in Cedar Rapids there may be fifteen or twenty church choirs that buy that anthem because it’s doable and we’re going to make good profit off of that. How many sales are we going to get from the B-Minor Mass? Maybe one symphony in Seattle.” I said, “The bottom line, it’s all about the money?” He said, “That’s what it’s all about.” I liked Brian; in fact he wound up leaving Columbia. He started his own business someplace else. I don’t even know where he went. I’ve got quite a few different publishers who have in effect said the same thing. “Hey, that’s a good piece, but you’ve got to find somebody else to publish it because that’s not in our market. That’s not a part of our marketing emphasis right now.” If I ask what the marketing emphasis is, they will tell me—“Keep it simple, Stupid.”

Curington: You live in the Midwest where many show choirs call home. What impact has pop, Broadway, and commercial music had on choral music?

Koepke: To my chagrin, it’s become a rather important focus. I think that it’s “dumbed down” choral music. Just speaking from a purely musical standpoint, it’s really rather unfortunate. At least I know in Iowa that most schools, if you’re not going to sing in the concert choir, then you’re not going to sing in the show choir, either. I’m glad that we’re holding onto that because at least they are getting both sides of the coin. I know that there are other places where that’s not a requirement. So that all they are getting then is all of the frosting on the cake and they’re getting no cake at all. That’s too bad. I really think Iowa, and I might say also Wisconsin, Minnesota, in fact the Upper Midwest, including parts of Nebraska, are holding on. I’ve judged in Missouri, and I think there are good things going on in Missouri. So the upper part of the Heartland I think is rather strong in choral music. I think a lot of that has to do with the influence of certain Lutheran colleges on the development of choral musicians who have gone out like little missionaries all over. I mean, let’s talk about St. Olaf College. Let’s talk about Luther College. Let’s talk about Concordia. Let’s talk about Augsburg. We can go on and on. They are all Lutheran schools, and I’m not saying only good things come out of Lutheran schools.

Curington: But, a lot of good has come out of them.

Koepke: Big time. So, these very talented choral directors are so grounded in the practical application of what good choral music is about, from literature to technique, and they go out and they begin to develop good programs all over the place. Just like two mice breeding, so that in a few generations they are spread out all over the place. I think we have a little bit of that in the Upper Midwest. It could be also in other places that I am not aware of. I don’t know what’s going on in Ohio and Pennsylvania and Georgia with

choral music in the high schools. I don't know. I would hope that there is some of that, but I do know it's going on in the Upper Midwest. All you have to do is just go to show choir contests in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Indiana and Nebraska. Just go to one, and you'll find out what's going on. I've seen some terrific show choirs. Listen, I went to Michigan about five years ago to judge the state music contest, and it was the third level.

All of the schools go to level one, and all of the schools that come out of level one with I ratings now go to level two. All of the schools that come out of level two with I ratings go on to level three, which they call State. That's what I went to. I went to Jackson, Michigan, Grand Rapids and Saginaw. In those three days, I heard two-hundred and fifty choirs, in three locations. Some of the finest choral singing I've heard in my life, I heard in Michigan. So, it's there. I also heard from I rated schools some terrible singing. How they got there, I don't know, but that's another story. I was in Missouri judging at the Six Flags Competition. I only heard seventy-five choirs there. My, I heard some fine choirs in Missouri. The unfortunate thing is that the worst choirs that I heard in Missouri were from St. Louis. The worst choirs that I heard in Michigan were from Detroit. Those city schools, they haven't got it going. They are awful. What I found to be terribly interesting was that one of the schools from Detroit was an all-Black school with a Black choir director. She was "Ms. Energy." The kids just loved her. They sang a Renaissance piece and they sang a Gospel piece. They rocked the socks off the Gospel piece. I mean it was exciting. The Renaissance piece they sang like a Gospel piece. So I said to them, "There is a Renaissance style, there is a Baroque style, a Classical style, a Jazz style, there is a Gospel style." I also said, "What if I told you I wanted you to sing your Gospel piece like it's a Renaissance piece? How would you feel about that?" All of them said, "We can't do that." I said, "Well, let's then do it the other way. What if I asked you to take a Gospel song style and apply that same kind of style to the Renaissance piece?

How would you feel about that?" They went, "That's what we're doing, isn't it?" I said, "Yeah. Let's talk about the Renaissance. Let's talk about how you sing a Renaissance piece, the tone quality, how you approach it." I had all of them do some "oooo" sounds higher and higher. I said, "Now, that is very different from the chest sound that you used with the Gospel." I had them sing "loo loo loo" with a very light tone. I had them watch my hands and made them get louder and softer as my hands went up and down. They began to sing really nicely. I asked, "How did that feel?" They said it really felt great. I said, "Now, put the words to it." I said, "When you have the melody, that tune, it may be only four or five notes, but when you have that moment, bring that out, and make that more important, and then back off because when you back off, there is going to be another part that will have that same theme." I worked with that for about fifteen minutes. We got done, and the choir just looked at me. And, I applauded them, and they applauded me. The choir director came up to me, and she hugged me, and said, "Wow, we all learned something today." I said, "Good." That was one of the proudest moments of my life because I transformed something that was going on in their music, and they got it. They understood. That was fun. When I say I am a teacher, that's what it's about.

Getting back to the question, though, Pop and Broadway has brought choral music to some prominence. Kids who wouldn't normally want to go out for choir might be attracted to choral music because of the show choir. Once you've got their foot in the door, maybe then they can realize that singing a piece by Mozart, or singing "Wade in de

Water,” or something like that might be a good experience. So, from that standpoint, I think it’s a way of getting the foot in the door and getting their interest piqued.

Curington: Is your approach to arranging different from composing?

Koepke: Yes, but only from this standpoint. When I am composing, I’m not purposefully trying to do something unique and different in order to make it appealing. I’m just writing for whatever it’s worth. When I’m arranging, I’m doing something that is purposefully different, and therefore making it appealing. If you are arranging a piece that means it has already been done before, and so great effort is taken to make it be truly different. I think my attitude as I am arranging, I am always asking myself how do you make it different? The repeated rhythms of “Wade in de Water” come to mind. I go to great lengths to make it unique. I have so much more freedom to do what I want to do when I am not arranging. There are restrictions built in when you are arranging. The trick is to try to make it fresh. That’s sometimes harder than composing. As you will see, when you are going through things besides the biblical pieces, almost everything is my text. I feel very comfortable writing poetry, and as I am writing the poetry, things are automatically clicking when it comes to the music without me really being aware of it.

It’s when I get the poetry done is when I am ready to roll with the music, and I think it is because my mind is already processing the music without even deliberately thinking about it. The form also begins to take shape because of the lyrics. I like composing pieces that are through-composed because I find myself bombarded with so many new ideas when I am writing, and if you confine yourself to a ternary form, or a binary form, or even rondo, you’re kind of held slave to the form. There are some things that you will discover that are ternary and ABA. That’s the way it worked: verse chorus, verse chorus.

But particularly the *Missa Brevis*, with perhaps a few exceptions, is virtually through-composed. The same thing was true of the *Te Deum*. I didn’t bring the *Te Deum* along.

Curington: Is it published?

Koepke: No. It was sent to Hinshaw right after Don Hinshaw died. Don was the one who was excited about the *Missa Brevis*. He died, and subsequently I sent *Te Deum* there, and with Don gone, there was a reluctance to publish *Te Deum* because *Missa Brevis* had limited sales. Publishing houses are very reluctant when scores include the choral score and the trumpet and trombone, oboe and everything else. It takes a lot of time and money to put all of that together. Then, if you’re only going to have five or ten performances of it in a year, they don’t want to do it. It’s too expensive. But, Don wanted to do it anyway. He liked *Missa Brevis*. Had he been alive, I’m fairly certain that he probably would have done the *Te Deum*. With Don gone, now it was simply about dollar signs. On the basis of the sales of *Missa Brevis*, they weren’t going to go with *Te Deum*. I talked to Santa Barbara, and they said, “Well, that’s just out of our league. We don’t do orchestra to that extent.” Again, once my balloon is popped, I say, “Okay,” and I don’t pursue it anymore. This is a flaw. I’m not a quitter, but then I just want to move on to something else. So, I’ve got to go back and revisit my music that has not been accepted the first time, and start sending things out. Anyway, I have a lot more fun

writing my own stuff. On the other hand, when I get a commission to do something else, and they say very often, “This is what I want the piece to be about,” they give me wide parameters, and then the challenge is to make them happy. The problem with commissions is you’re writing for a specific ensemble, and sometimes the ensemble is a hundred and fifty or two-hundred voice chorus that can sing anything, and that’s what they want. They want a tough piece, one that they can chomp down on. Other times it’s a small church choir in a small town with eighteen people in the choir with five guys.

You still want to make them happy, so it’s really tough sometimes to make something meaningful and yet accessible to that particular ensemble. Here’s what happens: You send it off to a publishing house, and they look at it, and they say, “Are you kidding me?

How many choirs could possibly sing this?” On the other hand, they will look at it, and say, “This has been dumbed down so much that I don’t think this publishing house wants to have that kind of music represented.” So, you’re caught between a rock and a hard place. It’s frustrating, sometimes.

Curington: I came across a two-part piece that you’ve written. Do you do much of that?

Koepke: No. That was a one-time thing. The church I’m at decided that it would be really nice for the choir to have a song that they do with the children, where the children would have a simple melody that they could sing. We’re talking about five- or seven-year-old children. The only song that I could think of that had a very limited range that they probably already knew was “Jesus Loves Me.” So, I decided that would be it. I wanted the children to be featured, and I didn’t want the choir part to be overwhelming.

My initial thought was that it would be for the women of the choir and children. I have done it several times since then, even with the men singing the opening part, then on the turnaround, bring in the women singing the “Jesus Loves Me.” It works really well that way. It’s a nice contrast in timbre, and you get the “Jesus Loves Me” and you also get the message of 2 Corinthians. That was an unusual circumstance.

Curington: Do you feel more comfortable composing music or arranging music?

Koepke: I don’t think that there is any difference. I love doing both. I love the challenge of arranging because I like the challenge of trying to come up with something that’s rather new and fun like “Zekiel.” It’s like a game that you play when you arrange.

When you are writing or composing, I don’t look at it as a game, at all. There’s a different feel to it. I love coming up with original material as much as I can, whether it be a rhythmic device or a harmonic device. I can’t say that one is any better or more exciting than the other.

Curington: What effect has the commission had on your composition process?

Koepke: Sometimes, you go into something that you wouldn’t normally do because you’ve never thought about it. I just did a piece two years ago for the Marion School District. They wanted a song about education. They wanted an elementary choir, middle school choir, and high school choirs, all in the same piece. So, it was another quodlibet

piece. I told you a few days ago that I like writing contrapuntally. Well, when you are writing quodlibet, that's what you're doing. Here were three different groups that will all be singing the same piece, but I didn't want it to be redundant. So, I had to write three separate songs that would all gel and fit with each other so that each song would be distinctive. The text for the children would be a childish text. What do children think about with regards to school? What do middle school kids think about? It's totally different. What do high school kids think about school? I came up with three different texts that were very different from each other. Then, at the very end, I threw them all together, and it was just a hodgepodge of texts going all over the place, but the audience had already heard each one, so it didn't make any difference at that point. The thing that was neat about it was that at that moment, it was all distinctive and together at the same time. It was very cool. I did a commission for First Presbyterian Church in St. Petersburg, Florida two years ago. For Tom Lippert. That's where he is now. It was written in celebration of the 40th anniversary of their organist being at the church. He was a dynamite organist, about sixty-two, sixty-three-years old. He taught organ at one of the colleges there. Tom said, "I've got a good choir. We are also going to bring in people from five or six other choirs to be a part of this, and Jack is a really excellent organist. Write something challenging for both organ and choir." So, I wrote a very challenging piece, especially for the organist. Okay, you get done with that and want to send it to a publishing house. They will look at it, and go, "Are you out of your mind?" How many organists are going to be able to play that?" So I've given you three examples.

Curington: Did you send that to a publisher?

Koepke: No. It didn't have a chance. And, that's what I'm talking about. How many school districts would have a situation where this is going to happen? It's not going to happen.

Curington: A situation would have to be created.

Koepke: Exactly. See, when I was teaching high school, every year I had a music festival where Taft, Roosevelt and Wilson came over to Jefferson. They all presented their own two or three songs. Then, I would have my concert choir sing. I'd have my women's choir sing. My different groups would sing a couple of songs. Westside Delegation would get out there and sing a couple of songs, but then we would always have a song at the very end, and I would set it up so that the kids from the middle schools were sitting in between high school kids all the way through. Just the idea, "I get to sit next to a high school kid." That was really exciting for them. It was always tough to find a song that they would be able to sing. It was a great recruiting device. How many school districts do what I was doing?

Curington: Did you ever teach middle school?

Koepke: Middle school kids have attitudes now. I sure did at Clear Lake. I had grades 5

through high school at Clear Lake for seven years. I enjoyed it. That was a time back in the early '60s where we didn't have discipline problems. Kids had respect for the teachers and the school. They respected the rules of the school. They talked to each other with respect. They didn't do stupid and dumb things like I see now. If you were excited about music as I was, and you had something to offer the kids, and you got them on your side, they became more in your corner than anyone. I had a great thing going at Clear Lake. I started something where, without kids knowing it, in the sixth grade they would be auditioning for seventh-grade chorus. At the end of the year, I had a little tape recorder, and I would say, "Here's a great chance for all of you. We've been working on singing and how to sing, but I bet you haven't ever heard yourself sing, have you? How would you like to hear yourself sing?" So, I took every kid in sixth grade, all hundred and fifty of them. They came in, and they sang "Silent Night" or "My County Tis of Thee." I recorded it. It only took forty-five seconds. I played it back and praised them and told them the great potential they had to be a good singer. When I was all done with it, then I would post the Seventh-Grade Chorus, and out of a hundred and fifty kids, there were maybe ten or twenty kids that were unacceptable for various reasons. But, what I would do is post the list, and say, "This is the list for Seventh-Grade Chorus for next year, but if you don't want to be in the chorus, all you have to do right now is go up there and cross your name off the list." Well, once they are in it and all of their friends are in it, they're not going to do that. It's kind of a low-handed thing to do, but on the other hand, when school started the next year, I had a seventh-grade chorus of about a hundred and twenty kids. That kept on manifesting over again as the years would go on. When I started at Clear Lake, we had a chorus of about fifty-five. That was seventh and eighth grades. The junior high consistently had about three-hundred kids in it, and when I left Clear Lake, the seventh-grade and eighth-grade choruses together numbered about two-hundred and seventy kids. There were only twenty or thirty kids who weren't singing in my choirs. Then they would go to high school, and we would have about three-hundred and fifty kids singing in a high school of four hundred. Everybody was singing. The interesting thing is that when I went to Jefferson, a school of eighteen hundred, I had about the same number of students singing, about three-hundred and fifty. That improved as the years went on, but the potential was so much greater at Jefferson.

Curington: Do you write for areas other than choral music? I noticed the plays, for instance.

Koepke: My love is choirs, and I wind up writing with orchestral accompaniment when the commission says this is what we want. Like, with the All-State piece that commemorated Iowa All-State's 50th Anniversary. It called for band and orchestra. Or Chamberlain's piece, where they wanted symphony orchestra. I'm not inclined to do that on a regular basis because, at least for me, it takes forever. I'm very good at writing choral music. I really understand the voice and its difficulties. I don't know how to play a clarinet. I haven't got a clue. I just have to be careful that I don't get too wild and crazy so the clarinet player doesn't say, "Are you kidding me? This is impossible to play." I had an embarrassing thing happen with the *Missa Brevis*. I went up to Cedar Falls to a rehearsal, and during a break, Chamberlain said, "Could you come up to the

stage for a moment? The oboe player wants to ask you something.” I said, “Yes, dear what do you want?” She said, “Well, I got a couple of notes here. I can’t play that low. They don’t exist.” Had I been writing on *Finale*, those notes would have turned red.

Well, *Encore* doesn’t turn red. I turned red. So, I just gave her some different notes to play. Turns out that she’s the daughter of my organist at church. I didn’t know her from Adam at the time. I didn’t find this out until four or five years ago when she admitted, “I was the oboe player.” So the answer, in a roundabout way, is no, except the director of the Cedar Rapids Symphony looked at my composition that I wrote for the church in St. Petersburg, and said, “I’d really like you to orchestrate the organ. I’d like to do this.”

Now, that would be another motivation and a reason to purchase *Finale* or *Sibelius* because then you are working with the Garritan orchestra. So, I’m kind of motivated to orchestrate the organ part, which would be really fun to do because it is a wild and crazy organ part. I already hear the orchestration in my head.

Curington: Did the organist like it?

Koepke: Oh, yeah, he loved it. He said, “I’ve got to tell you one thing. I very seldom have to practice.” He said, “But, I practiced a lot.” Boy, he just nailed it. It was really good.

Curington: I’ve noticed that a good majority of your music is under the umbrella of Santa Barbara. How did that relationship begin?

Koepke: In 1992, the Iowa Choral Director’s Association had a composers contest, and if you look on the front cover of “Dance on My Heart,” you’ll see winner of the 1992 Iowa Composition Contest. Part of the reward was a guarantee that it would be published. Santa Barbara was just starting up. In fact, I believe “Dance on My Heart” has a serial number of 037, the thirty-seventh song ever published by Santa Barbara. That’s how I got connected with Santa Barbara. They had an agreement with ICDA.

Curington: So, you have had a long history from the very beginnings of Santa Barbara Publishing, basically.

Koepke: Oh, yeah. I think Santa Barbara started up around ‘90 or ‘91. They have only been going for twenty years. I won that contest, and they were very excited about the piece. They were very encouraging. So much so, that it just became my natural first option to send to Santa Barbara. I’ve had a lot of pieces turned down by Santa Barbara because she does not like religious music. She just doesn’t.

Curington: Who is she?

Koepke: Barbara Harlow. She and her son David pretty much run it. They just turned over to Alfred. Alfred now is the distributor of all of their music. So, when I get royalty checks, I don’t get them from Santa Barbara. I get them from Alfred. Barbara is probably seventy-five. She sang with the Roger Wagner Chorale. She taught at Santa Barbara

City College. She was the choir director there. She is a good musician. She is a businesswoman from the word go. She is a lady of few words. If she is double excited about your piece, she'll say, "I really like it. Let's go with it. Barbara." That's it. If she doesn't like it, she'll write back, and say, "Allen, not this one. Barbara." That's it. Have you seen my "Wuh-Duh-Yuh Do with a Drunken Sailor?"

Curington: Yes.

Koepke: When I sent that to her, usually I hear from her in about a week, which in most other publishing houses, you'll hear from them maybe in a year. Seriously. It just goes into a pile, and then when they get around to it... For instance at Columbia Pictures Publications, they have a certain month when they review music for the coming year. So, let's say that month is January. If you happen to send them a piece in February, you have to wait eleven months before they even get around to looking at the piece. Barbara has a turnaround of just days. With "Wuh-Duh-Yuh Do with a Drunken Sailor?" she wrote me back saying "Wuh-Duh-Yuh Do with a Drunken Sailor? You publish it!" In capital letters. That's the most excited she's been about anything I've ever sent her.

Curington: I've listened to it. It's really fun.

Koepke: It's a lot of fun. Washington High School did it at state music contest two years ago, and they just tore up the place. The audience just really went crazy with the piece.

Curington: When you are conducting a festival and one of your pieces is programmed, do you approach your piece differently than the other pieces?

Koepke: Yeah, I probably do. I don't intend to, but I know exactly why the composer did what he did at that moment. So, I'm much more intimate with the piece. I don't have to guess why did he do this, or why did he do that? I know why he did it. So, I will work to achieve what I have in my head. Whereas, I am not always sure why composer X did what he did. I can surmise, and if he is a good composer, I can come pretty close to coming up with what his intentions were. It isn't that I look at my piece as being a better piece. I'm just more familiar with it. I will probably work harder in getting certain things right. It's not that I favor my piece, because I don't. It's just that I know it better, so I am naturally inclined to kind of shoot for perfection.

Curington: Nobody really hears it like you hear it.

Exactly. I can pick up any piece of music and know exactly what it sounds like. I don't have to sit at a piano to hear it. When I pick up my own piece, the angels are singing that with perfection. The only time I have heard a recording of something that I've done that exceeded my own expectations was that Korean choir that I told you about where they sang "And Nature Smiled." They sang it better than I ever imagined it.

Curington: And differently than you had imagined.

Koepke: And differently, that's right, and that's what surprised me. It was just like being in a trance. It was something else.

Curington: Would you say that your writing style has grown over the years? Are you a different composer now than you were in 1980?

Koepke: Oh, I think so. I don't know if I could define exactly what the difference is.

Curington: Well, for instance, Mozart—everybody knows that he borrowed techniques from his contemporaries.

Koepke: That was okay then. It was okay to steal. I've had people accuse me of stealing from myself. They'll say, "That sounds like something you wrote a while back," and I'll say, "Really?" Harmonically, you might discover something like that in the *Missa Brevis*. But, I will let you discover it for yourself. It's something I do harmonically with chord shifts. Chamberlain caught it right away. He said, "You're really attracted to—" And I said, "Yeah, I am." He said, "You consistently do it throughout the piece." I said, "You're right. I just love it." So, I'll let you see if you can figure out what that is because it's there all over the place. I don't think a person can continuously write and not learn from what you do and seek to become more proficient. Almost everything I have ever written, I've had some group sing it—my church choir, my college choir, my high school choir. With that, you discover things about what you've done that you wished you would have done a little differently or a little better. I think you carry those thoughts to the next piece so that you don't make the same mistakes. I'm talking about very small things, but nevertheless.

Curington: You don't have that piece that you say to yourself, "I could write that better now."

Koepke: No, I don't think so. When I get done with a piece, I think I said last time, there's something that says it's done now. I do a re-do five, ten, fifteen times, and I keep going over it and keep going over it, making adjustments. Sometimes, it's a matter of putting in a rest where I didn't have a rest. Little things. But, there comes a day that you go "That's it."

Curington: So you are not a Maurice Durufle, who continues to tweak for a lifetime.

Koepke: A little bit of tweaking, but you do have to come to place where you just have to accept what you've done. Yeah, you could tweak and never get anything published because you're never satisfied with what you've done. Anything that I have ever sent to a publishing house, I have had the feeling that it's done, it's as good as it's going to be. There is one song in here. You're going to just die. It's the nuttiest thing I've ever done,

ever. Here it is. Go ahead and read the text. I debated whether I wanted you to see that or not. There is a story behind that.

Curington: So, the story is?

Koepke: Well, I have to back up a bit; I have to tell you this one moment. So, you know Ann Kimmel, Jim's wife?

Curington: No, I only know Jim.

Koepke: Jim's wife is Ann Kimmel, and she's a pretty good musician in her own right, a lovely lady. Jim takes this piece that I sent to him. He takes it home, and he says, "take a look at this. What do you think?" So she looks at it, and after a while she looks up at Jim, and says, "Are you kidding me? What's this? This is junk. What is this?" Jim laughed. I had sent a cover letter explaining the song. What I said in the cover letter is how this all happened. I was at Kirkwood, and my Jazz choir did a concert. What are songs about? Love. Almost everything was about love somewhere or another. So, my dean comes up to me after the concert, and she said, "That was a great concert. But, do you have to do all of those sappy love songs? Is there something else where it's not about love, where it's about—" and she paused, and I said, "Hate?" She said, "Well, yeah, something like that. I just hate these sappy love songs." Well, what are you going to find? So, I said, "Okay, Rhonda, this one's going to be for you. I'll write you something." I never told her about it. So, at our next concert, before we sang it, I said, "Ladies and gentlemen, I think you all know Rhonda Kekke, my assistant dean," and looked right at her, and said, "Rhonda, this one's for you." Then, we did that piece. The audience was falling out of their chairs. But, you've got to know that's all done in fun. This is not a serious piece folks, and I made sure the audience understood that this was a joke, a musical joke. After it was all over with, I then explained to the whole audience Rhonda's position on sappy love songs. The interesting thing is that Jim never sent this to me to edit, so there are about fifteen mistakes in this piece. She also said, "And all those stupid rhymes!" So, I put in words like tune, bloom, moon, June, mad, sad, bad, glad, everything I could to make it as drippy awful as I possibly could. It was fun. My group really enjoyed singing it. They really got into it.

Curington: How do you decide on texture and accompanying instruments in your music? For instance, how do you decide that a piece will be SATB and piano, or SATB, piano and clarinet? How do you decide the layers that you'll include with each piece?

Koepke: Have you seen "Angels of the Wind"?

Curington: Yes

Koepke: Well, in it I use three instruments, and each of the instruments describes something else about the wind, and sometimes the instrument will reflect that wind. I like writing for flute. I like writing for oboe, and of course both of them present a

different color. It just depends upon what the piece is about. Flute can be very mysterious and sad, but it can also be marvelously joyful and happy. Oboe has the tendency to be a little more on the sad side than the happy side, except I have heard some pieces with oboe that are jumping all over the place and fun. If you look at "Fanfare of Triumph." There are three movements, and the first movement has three trumpets, trombone, tuba and timpani. The text, "Lift up your heads," dictates that it is a very joyous piece so I've got the brass going. In the second movement, it's the "Agnus Dei," and it calls for flute, oboe, clarinet, muted trumpet, and that's a little different. You don't often see that. If this is being done with just organ, then the organ will play all of the parts, but if it is being done with instruments, then the organ just does the left hand. It's just organ all the way through in parallel fifths. This is just an intertwining kind of thing going on that I think is rather charming. The muted trumpet, I got that in there because there is just something very eerie, and it goes well with an oboe, and the oboe always goes well with the flute just for contrast. So, with those three instruments, it's really very nice. My choir loves to sing it, and it is very simple. Good Friday. It really works. The third piece for Easter, "Risen." I use then all of the instruments in that one: the brass, percussion and winds. I especially like the second and third movements. I think there are certain instruments that define better whatever the text is and the tone of the piece. How fast is it? How slow is it? How happy or sad is it? What key are you talking about? Is it modal? Is it minor? Is it major? You take the combination of that and the text, then, if the writing of instrumentation will add to the piece, then you do that. I get a lot of choir music with flute, or a choir piece with oboe. Sometimes, it's really a nice addition to the piece, and sometimes, you wonder why the composer thought an oboe needed to be added when it would work well without an oboe. Sometimes, it will say optional. My son and I together wrote a song called "I Listened." It was another commission. It was for Linn-Mar High School appearing at ACDA in Madison, Wisconsin. Bob said, "Do anything you want." So, I started writing this piece because my son had sent me a poem that really touched me. My son is into the earth. He's all about respecting the earth. It really spoke to me. I called him up, and I said, "Scott, I'm writing a song, and I would like to use your text." He said, "Well, I didn't write it for that; it was for you, Dad." I said, "I know, but do you mind if I use it?" He said, "No, if that's what you want to do." I got about halfway through it, and I realized there wasn't enough text. I needed more, and I needed to make a further point that he wasn't making. So, I wrote it out and I contacted him, and said, "I've added to it. If you don't like this, just say so, and I'll not do it." So, I read it to him, and he said, "Oh, Dad, that's fine." In that particular piece, I needed to have a single chime, one chime. It happens at the very end of the piece. I told Bob [Anderson] to have the chime hidden. I didn't want people to see it. I wanted it to be a surprise. At the very end of the piece as it is decaying with the words, "I listened," all of a sudden you hear the chime. That's very effective. So, why would you add a chime? It was the right thing to happen at that point in the piece. They had the chime hidden behind somebody in the choir. In fact, I was even looking for the chime and couldn't find it, and all of a sudden there it was. I didn't even know who was playing it until the choir walked off the risers. It was single chime. He had it hanging from one little hook.

Curington: How do you decide that a piece of music needs to be released in another voicing? Is that something you decide, or is it the publisher?

Koepke: The publisher. For example, “Angels of the Wind,” I wrote for SSA, and Pete Eklund wanted to do it with his men, and it hadn’t been written for men. Barbara Harlow asked if it was okay for Pete to do it. He was just going to have them sing everything an octave lower. The problem was that there were certain textures that were too thick and weren’t working well, so when I considered it, I wrote back to Pete, and said, “I’m going to send you another version. I have adjusted some things.” The other thing that was happening was that the piano part, when the women are singing high, there were certain things that were happening in the left hand that were fine, but if you take those notes and put them down lower, then suddenly it became mushy and muddy. So, I had to change some of those things. I didn’t have to make a whole lot of adjustments, but I did have to make some because the textures had gotten thick.

Curington: But, it is usually something that is initiated by the publisher?

Koepke: Yes. I don’t recall that I have ever written something for women, and then also said, “And, also here is TTBB, or whatever.” That will come from the publisher, and they’ll say, “We’d like to have that arrangement in another voicing.”

Curington: Although you write well for all voicings, is your preference SATB?

Koepke: Yes. I think I prefer mixed voices. You can just do more with mixed voices. But, there are some things that you write that wouldn’t be right for women’s voices. Just like, “Wuh-Duh-Yuh Do with a Drunken Sailor?” or “The Sea is Now Calling” wouldn’t work for women. Of course, “Speak to the Child of Love” wouldn’t work for men.

Curington: In your opinion, who are the influential composers writing today? Influential, or composers whose work you admire.

Koepke: One of my favorites is John Rutter. I’ve done everything John Rutter has ever written. I think we were the first choir in Iowa to do the *Mass of the Children*, which I think is his best work. That and the *Gloria* stand out as being the best of Rutter. His *Te Deum* is good, too. My daughter is the director of the Cedar Rapids Symphony’s Children’s Choir, the Discovery Chorus. When I was going to do this out at the church, I asked my daughter if she could gather together about twenty cherubs. She did, and they were very good. I was just really proud of that performance. So, John Rutter is one. My second favorite after him is Z. Randall Stroope. I just think he is a really fine composer. We did “Come Dwell in Solomon’s Walls” as our finale last May, and I brought some brass in about the last twenty seconds of the piece to just pump it up a bit. I like Z. a lot. I like Craig Courtney. He writes simply, but it’s really done well. I like the way he writes. Gilbert Martin is another one I like. Do you know Mary McDonald? She really knows how to spin a melody. If you want something really pretty, check into Mary McDonald. Do you know Aaron David Miller? You need to know that name. Anne

Krentz Organ is another good name. And, then there is John Ness Beck that everybody knows. I don't know where I would rank him, but he has written some nice things. He's sort of similar to Allen Pote. He's a little pop oriented, but he writes well. John Leavitt writes some nice things. "Festival Sanctus" is probably his defining piece. He's gotten a lot of mileage out of that. Mack Wilberg is doing some nice writing. Those are the ones that came to my mind. I'm sure there are others that I just haven't thought of. What they write makes sense. The choirs enjoy singing it, and congregations enjoy hearing it, and that's what you want.

Curington: What do you think of Eric Whitacre?

Koepke: For church?

Curington: For anything.

Koepke: Oh, I like him very much. He's got a lot of things that I like. They all kind of sound the same. I mean, he has his harmonic style. I think he's extremely talented. Do you know Joshua Shank?

Curington: Yes. Is he from Iowa? Didn't he go to Luther?

Koepke: Yes, he went to Luther.

Curington: Yes, I like his stuff.

Koepke: Oh, yeah, he's very good. He's just young. Right now, he's twenty-five-years old or so. Yeah, I like Whitacre. It's not very accessible, though. You've got to have a really good choir. To do Whitacre well, it's all about balance. You've got to have that perfect balance going on in the choir to get that texture. If the balance isn't right, then you'll hear parts sticking out that shouldn't really be sticking out. You've got to craft that so finely to make it work, but when it's working, it's really fine.

Curington: It's interesting that you bring up that he has this "sound." You don't have a Koepke "sound."

Koepke: I'm not sure exactly what it is, but I've been told that when people hear a Koepke piece that they know it's me. People say that they can identify one of my pieces without knowing who exactly wrote it. I'm not sure I understand what that means. I told you that I try as hard as I can to be eclectic. I try not to settle in on one sound. Maybe it's the writing of a spiritual that the textures sound alike, or the tune changes are similar. Maybe there is something that I do from one piece to another that is similar.

Curington: Well, I think Whitacre is that way. I think Lauridsen is the same way. You can tell a Lauridsen piece right away. But, you can also tell a Mozart piece, too, so I don't think it is necessarily a bad thing.

Koepke: I don't either. Mozart sounds like Mozart, and Haydn sounds like Haydn, and they wrote kind of the same style, but there is a difference between them. Handel sounds like Handel, and Bach sounds like Bach.

Curington: Is there some type of composition something that you haven't done that has eluded you at this point?

Koepke: The answer is yes, and it's going to surprise you when I tell you. I'd like to write a piece for just symphony orchestra. I've been saying—I know I've been saying I'm a choral guy, but I'd like to see what it feels like not to have—and this is going to sound wrong—not to have the restriction of a choir and to have this free and open idiom. This is why I'm excited about taking my organ part in the commission piece for St. Petersburg and writing that because although there is a choir part attached to it, there's going to be a great deal of freedom. I want to have an opportunity for myself to do that. I like having commissions because it forces me to write. There was a time in my life for about eight years that I never was without a commission. I was just writing one thing after the next. There were a couple of times where was working on three commissions simultaneously. Right now, I haven't got a commission. So, I wind up—I don't think being lazy is the right thing to say—I just wind up getting myself involved in a lot of other things. Right now, I'm doing a lot of conducting. When you're conducting, your preparation takes time, and the actual events take time. I just conducted *The Producers* here in Cedar Rapids, and that took a lot of my time with rehearsals and performances. Just getting my manuscript ready for rehearsal, so that I knew what I was doing took a lot of time. Don't ever conduct *The Producers*. That thing is a nightmare. When you do it and it turns out well, that's really an accomplishment. So, I'd like to write a symphony. I'd also like to write a book. I've got the plot. I've got everything figured out.

Curington: Fiction or non-fiction?

Koepke: This would be fiction. It hasn't happened, and I hope it never happens. It's about terrorism. The premise is something that I've never seen in any other author. I've read every Ludlin and Nelson Demille book. Ed Thorpe is my new exciting author. I've got an idea that I think is exciting that would be very intriguing, and I'm dying to write it.

Curington: Write it. You don't have a commission right now.

Koepke: You know what? I look at these guys who write these books, and they've got a staff of thirty people working with them and they travel all over the world getting all of the right material that they need. They have a connection at the CIA, the FBI, and I'm just a little musician out in Iowa. So, I would have to spend a lot of time doing some research to get it right. There are other authors that write that are also exciting that don't have to have all of that information, and I think I could probably write it with a minimum amount of research, but I'm dying to do it. But, right now I'm scraping wallpaper. I'm getting ready to move in two years. I'm in my seventies now, and I feel like I'm starting

to run out of time. So, I have to be careful that I spend my time wisely. I've still have a health problem that I'm always aware of, so I'm walking a tight rope right now.

APPENDIX D

DIGITAL EDITION OF *MISSA BREVIS*

Missa Brevis: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo

Score

Allen Koepke

♩ = 60 Legato "Kyrie"

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

Piano

mp

f (solo)

Ky - ri - e e -

6 3

S

A

T

B

Pno.

cresc.

ff

mf

f

mf

f

mf

le - i - son,

e - lei - i - son,

Tutti *mf* div. e - lei - i - son, *f* unis.

Ky - ri - e e - lei - i - son, Chris - te e -

div. *mf*

Ky - ri - e e - lei - i - son,

6 9

Hinshaw Music

2 Missa Brevis: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo *mp*

S *f* Chris-te e - le - i - son e - le - i - son. *dim. mp*

A *f* Chris-te e - le - i - son e - le - i - son. *dim. mp*

T *f* lei-i-son. Chris-te e - le - i - son e - le - i - son. *dim. mp*

B *f* Chris-te e - le - i - son e - le - i - son. *dim. mp*

Pno. *f* *mp*

S *f* Chris - te e - le - i son, Chris - te e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son. *15*

A *f* *div.* Chris te e - le - i son, Chris - te e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son.

T *f* e - le - i son, Chris - te e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son.

B *f* e - le - i son, Chris - te e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son.

Pno. *f* *15*

Missa Brevis: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo *mf*

3

S *mp* Chris - te e - le - i - son Chris - te e - le - i - son Chris - te e - le - i - son

A *p* Chris - te e - le - i - son *mf* Chris - te e - le - i - son Chris - te e - le - i - son

T *p* Chris - te e - le - i - son *mf* Chris - te e - le - i - son Chris - te e - le - i - son

B *p* Chris - te e - le - i - son *mf* Chris - te e - le - i - son

Pno. *p* *mf*

S *ff* Chris - te e - le - i - son Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son Ky - ri - e e -

A *ff* Chris - te e - le - i - son Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son Ky - ri - e e -

T *ff* Chris - te e - le - i - son Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son Ky - ri - e e -

B *ff* Chris - te e - le - i - son Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son Ky - ri - e e -

Pno. *ff*

4 Missa Brevis: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo "Gloria" *mp*

S le - i - son Glo - ri - a in - ex - cel - sis *mp* div.

A le - i - son Glo - ri - a in - ex - cel - sis *p* div.

T le - i - son Glo - ri - a in - ex - cel - sis De - o *p* div.

B le - i - son. Glo - ri - a in - ex - cel - sis De - o,

Pno. *pp* *p* *mp*

S De - o Et in ter-ra pax Bo - nae - vo - lun - ta - tis. *p* *pp*

A De - o Et in ter-ra pax, ho - mi - ni - bus Bo - nae - vo - lun - ta - tis. *mp* *p* *pp*

T Et in ter-ra pax Bo - nae vo - lun - ta - tis. *mp* *p* *pp*

B De - o Et in ter-ra pax Bo - nae vo - lun - ta - tis. *mp* *p* *pp*

Pno. *p*

Missa Brevis: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo

5

mf $\text{♩} = 130$ 36

S Lau - da - mus te, — be-ne di-ci-mus te, — A - do-ra — mus te —

A *un. mf* Lau - da - mus te, — be-ne di-ci-mus te, — A - do-ra — mus te —

T 8 A - do-ra — mus te —

B A - do-ra — mus te —

sempre staccato $\text{♩} = 130$ 36

Pno.

f 39

S Glo - ri - fi - ca - mus te — Gra - ti - as a - gi - mus ti - bi

A Glo - ri - fi - ca - mus te — Gra - ti - as a - gi - mus ti - bi

T 8 Glo - ri - fi - ca - mus te — Gra - ti - as a - gi - mus ti - bi

B Glo - ri - fi - ca - mus te — Gra - ti - as a - gi - mus ti - bi

Pno. 39

6

Missa Brevis: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo

Accented!

42

S Prop - ter ma - gnam glo - ri - am tu - am, Do - mi - ne De - us, Rex coe - le - stis,

A Prop - ter ma - gnam glo - ri - am tu - am Do - mi - ne De - us, Rex coe - le - stis,

T Prop - ter ma - gnam glo - ri - am tu - am Do - mi - ne De - us, Rex coe - le - stis,

B Prop - ter ma - gnam glo - ri - am tu - am Do - mi - ne De - us, Rex coe - le - stis,

Pno.

ff

S De - us Pa - ter om - ni - po - tens, Do - mi - ne Fi - li u - ni - ge - ni - te

A De - us Pa - ter om - ni - po - tens, Do - mi - ne Fi - li u - ni - ge - ni - te

T De - us Pa - ter om - ni - po - tens, Do - mi - ne Fi - li u - ni - ge - ni - te

B De - us Pa - ter om - ni - po - tens, Do - mi - ne Fi - li u - ni - ge - ni - te

Pno.

ff

Missa Brevis: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo

7

S *f* *mf* *mp* *p* *rit.* *pp*
 Je - su Chri - ste! Do-mi-ne De - us a - gnus De - i Fi - li-us Pa - tris
 A *f* *mf* *mp* *p* *rit.* *pp*
 Je - su Chri - ste! Do-mi-ne De - us a - gnus De - i Fi - li-us Pa - tris
 T *f* *mf* *mp* *p* *rit.* *pp*
 Je - su Chris - ste! Do-mi-ne De - us a - gnus De - i Fi - li-us Pa - tris
 B *f* *mf* *mp* *p* *rit.* *pp*
 Je - su Chris - ste! Do-mi-ne De - us a - gnus De - i Fi - li-us Pa - tris
 Pno. *f* *mf* *mp* *rit.* *Legato* *pp*
 S *p* *rit.* *54*
 qui tol-lis pec-ca - ta mun - di
 A *p* *rit.*
 qui tol-lis pec-ca - ta mun - di
 T *p*
 mi-se - re - re no - bis
 B *p*
 mi-se - re - re no - bis
 Pno. *51* *72* *54*

8 Missa Brevis: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo

S *mp* *3* su - sci - pe de - pre - ca - ti - o - nem no - stram. Quo - ni - am tu so - lus San - ctus *div* 57

A *mp* *3* su - sci - pe de - pre - ca - ti - o - nem no - stram. Quo - ni - am tu so - lus San - ctus. *f* *3* *3*

T *mf* *cresc.* Qui se - des ad dex - ter - am Pa - tris, Tu so - lus Do - mi - nus *3*

B *mf* *cresc.* Qui se - des ad dex - ter - am Pa - tris, Tu so - lus Do - mi - nus *3*

Pno. *mp* *cresc.* 57

S *ff* *Accented!* 60 *Non-legato* Tu so - lus Al - tis - si - mus. Je - su Chris - te Cum san - cto Spi - ri - tu, in

A *ff* Tu so - lus Al - tis - si - mus Je - su Chris - te Cum san - cto Spi - ri - tu, in

T *ff* Tu so - lus Al - tis - si - mus Je - su Chris - te Cum san - cto Spi - ri - tu, in

B *ff* Tu so - lus Al - tis - si - mus Je - su Chris - te Cum san - cto Spi - ri - tu, in

Pno. *ff* 60

Missa Brevis: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo

9

63

S glo - ri - a De - i Pa - tris A - men, A - men A - - - men.

A glo - ri - a De - i Pa - tris A - men, A - men A - men, A - men, A - men.

T 8 glo - ri - a De - i Pa - tris A - men, A - men, A - men, A - men, A - men.

B glo - ri - a De - i Pa - tris A - men, A - men A - men, A - men A - men.

Pno. 63 rit. 66 *p*

69

S

A rit. unis.

T 8 *p* "straight" tone (chant-like) div. *mp* unis. Cre - do in u - num De - um Pa - trem om - ni - po ten - tem fac - to - rem cae - li et ter - rae,

B *p* div. *mp* unis. Cre - do in u - num De - um Pa - trem om - ni - po ten - tem fac - to - rem cae - li et - ter - rae.

69 72

Pno. 69 72

10 Missa Brevis: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo

mp *mf*

S vi - si - bi - li - um om - ni - um et in - vi - si - bi - li - um Cre - do in u - num

A *mp* *mf* div. vi - si - bi - li - um om - ni - um et in - vi - si bi - li - um Cre - do in u - num

T *mp* *mf* div. vi - si - bi - li - um om - ni - um et in - vi - si - bi - li - um Cre - do in u - num

B *mp* *mf* div. vi - si - bi - li - um om - ni - um et in - vi - si - bi - li - um. Cre - do in u - num

Pno. *mp*

75 78

S *f* Do - mi - num Je - sum Chris - tum, Fi - li - um De - i Ex Pa - tre na - tum

A *f* div. Do - mi - num Je - sum Chris - tum, Fi - li - um De - i Ex Pa - tre na - tum

T *f* Do - mi - num Je - sum Chris - tum, u - ni - ge - ni - tum. Ex Pa - tre an - te

B Do - mi - num Je - sum Chris - tum, u - ni - ge - ni - tum. Ex Pa - tre an - te

Pno. *mf* *f*

81

Missa Brevis: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo

11

84

S De - um de De - o lu - men de lu - mi - ne, De - um ve - rum de

A De - um de De - o lu - men de lu - mi - ne, De - um ve - rum de

T 8 om - ni - a sae - cu - la De - um de De - o lu - men de lu - mi - ne De - um ve - rum de

B om - ni - a sae - cu - la De - um de De - o lu - men de lu - mi - ne, De - um ve - rum de

Pno. 84 mp

87

S De - o ve - rum. Ge - ni - tum non fac - tum con - sub - stan - ti - a - lem Pa - tri per quem om - ni - a

A De - o ve - rum. Ge - ni - tum non fac - tum con - sub - stan - ti - a - lem Pa - tri per quem om - ni - a

T 8 De - o ve - rum. Ge - ni - tum non fac - tum con - sub - stan - ti - a - lem Pa - tri per quem om - ni - a

B De - o ve - rum. Ge - ni - tum non fac - tum con - sub - stan - ti - a - lem Pa - tri per quem om - ni - a

Pno. 87 mf

90

S De - o ve - rum. Ge - ni - tum non fac - tum con - sub - stan - ti - a - lem Pa - tri per quem om - ni - a

A De - o ve - rum. Ge - ni - tum non fac - tum con - sub - stan - ti - a - lem Pa - tri per quem om - ni - a

T 8 De - o ve - rum. Ge - ni - tum non fac - tum con - sub - stan - ti - a - lem Pa - tri per quem om - ni - a

B De - o ve - rum. Ge - ni - tum non fac - tum con - sub - stan - ti - a - lem Pa - tri per quem om - ni - a

Pno. 90 mf

12

Missa Brevis: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo

S *mp* 93 *mp*
 fac - ta sunt. Qui pro - t̃er non ho - mi - nes de - scen - dit de
 A *mp* 3 3 3
 fac - ta sunt. Qui prop - ter nos ho - mi - nes de - scen - dit de
 T 8 *mp*
 fac - ta sunt. et prop - ter nos - tr̃am sa - lu - tem de - scen - dit de
 B *mp* 3
 fac - ta sunt. et prop - ter nos - tr̃am sa - lu - tem de - scen - dit de
 Pno. *mp* 93 *mp* 3
 S 96 *p* *mf* (solo) *f* 99
 cae - lis Et in car - na - tus est de spi - ri - tu san - cto ex Ma - ri - a Vir - gi - ne
 A *p* *p*
 div. cae - lis
 T 8 *p*
 cae - lis
 B *p* *p*
 div. cae - lis
 Pno. 96 *p* 99

Missa Brevis: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo

13

et ho-mo fac-tus est.

Cru-ci-fi-xus e-ti-am pro no-bis sub Pon-ti-o Pi-la-to

Et re-sur-re-xit ter-ti-a Di-e se-cun-dum scrip-

pas-sus et se-pul-tus est

102

105

105

mf (solo) *f*

p *mf*

f (solo)

f (solo)

S

A

T

B

Pno.

Pno.

14

Missa Brevis: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo

Soprano (S): tu - ras Et a - scen - dit in cae - lum. se - det ad dex - te - ra, Pa -

Alto (A): - Et a - scen - dit in cae - lum, (mm) -

Tenor (T): tu - ras Et a - scen - dit in cae - lum, (mm) -

Bass (B): - Et a - scen dit in cae - lum, (mm) -

Piano (Pno.):

108

111

114

117

120

123

126

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1332</

Missa Brevis: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo

rit.

15

117

S cu - jus re - gni non e - rit — fi - nis — Cre - do Cre - do Cre - do Et in

A cu - jus re - gni non e - rit — fi - nis — Cre - do Cre - do Cre - do Et in

T 8 cu - jus re - gni non e - rit — fi - nis — Cre - do Cre - do Cre - do Et in

B cu - jus re - gni non e - rit — fi - nis — Cre - do Cre - do Cre - do Et in *rit.*

Pno. *rit.*

120 *Triumphantly (non-legato)* *f* 123 *rit.*

S Spi - ri - tum Sanc - tum, Do - mi - num et vi - vi - fi - can - tem: qui ex Pa - tre Fi - li - o - que Pro - ce - dit. *rit.*

A Spi - re - tum Sanc - tum, Do - mi - num et vi - vi - fi - can - tem: qui ex Pa - tre Fi - li - o - que Pro - ce - dit. *rit.*

T 8 Spi - re - tum Sanc - tum, Do - mi - num et vi - vi - fi - can - tem: qui ex Pa - tre Fi - li - o - que Pro - ce - dit. *rit.*

B Spi - re - tum Sanc - tum, Do - mi - num et vi - vi - fi - can - tem: qui ex Pa - tre Fi - li - o - que Pro - ce - dit. *rit.*

Pno. *f*

16

Missa Brevis: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo

126

S Qui-cum Pa - tre et Fi - li - o si - mul a - do - ra - tur et

A Qui-cum Pa - tre et Fi - li - o si - mul a - do - ra - tur et

T Qui-cum Pa - tre et Fi - li - o si - mul a - do - ra - tur et

B Qui-cum Pa - tre et Fi - li - o si - mul a - do - ra - tur et

Pno.

129

S con - glo - ri - fi - ca - tur: qui lo - cu - tus est per — pro - phe - tas

A con - glo - ri - fi - ca - tur: qui lo - cu - tus est per — pro - phe - tas.

T con - glo - ri - fi - ca - tur: qui lo - cu - tus est per — pro - phe - tas.

B con - glo - ri - fi - ca - tur: qui lo - cu - tus est per pro - phe - tas.

Pno.

Missa Brevis: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo

17

ff

S *ff* Cre - do et u - nam, sanc - tam, ca - tho - li - cam et a - pos - to - li - cam Ec -

A *ff* Cre - do et u - nam, sanc - tam, ca - tho - li - cam et a - pos - to - li - cam Ec -

T *ff* Cre - do et u - nam, sanc - tam, ca - tho - li - cam et a - pos - to - li - cam Ec -

B *ff* Cre - do et u - nam, sanc - tam, ca - tho - li - cam et a - pos - to - li - cam Ec -

Pno. *ff*

mf 135

S *mf* cle - si - am. Con - fi - te - or u - nam Bap - tis - ma in re -

A *mf* cle - si - am. Con - fi - te - or u - nam Bap - tis - ma in re -

T *mf* cle - si - am. Con - fi - te - or u - nam Bap - tis - ma in re -

B cle - si - am. in re -

Pno.

18

Missa Brevis: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo

S *ff*
 mis-si-o-nem pec-ca-to-rum. Et ex-pec-to re-sur-rec-ti-o-nem mor-tu-o-rum *ff*
 A *ff*
 mis-si-o-nem pec-ca-to-rum. Et ex-pec-to re-sur-rec-ti-o-nem mor-tu-o-rum *ff*
 T *ff*
 mis-si-o-nem pec-ca-to-rum. Et ex-pec-to re-sur-rec-ti-o-nem mor-tu-o-rum *ff*
 B *ff*
 mis-si-o-nem pec-ca-to-rum. Et ex-pec-to re-sur-rec-ti-o-nem mor-tu-o-rum

Pno. *ff*
 Heavily accented!

S *div.*
 Et vi-tam ven-tu-ri sae-cu-li. A-men, A-men,
 A *div.*
 Et vi-tam ven-tu-ri sae-cu-li A-men, A-men,
 T *div.*
 Et vi-tam ven-tu-ri sae-cu-li A-men, A-men,
 B *div.*
 Et vi-tam ven-tu-ri sae-cu-li A-men, A-men,

Pno. *ff*

Missa Brevis: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo—

19

Missa Brevis: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo

147

Segue

S

A

T

B

Pno.

rit.

rit.

rit.

rit.

rit.

A - - - men.

A - - - men.

A - - - men.

A - - - men

Segue

Missa Brevis: Part 2 Sanctus, Benedictus, Agnus Dei

Legato $\text{♩} = 60$ "Sanctus"

Soprano
p San - ctus *mp* San - ctus Do-mi-nus De-us Sa-ba - oth.

Alto
p San - ctus *mp* San - ctus Do-mi-nus De-us Sa-ba - oth. *div.*

Tenor
p San-ctus San - ctus *mp* San - ctus Do-mi-nus De-us Sa-ba - oth. *div.*

Bass
p San-ctus San - ctus *mp* San - ctus Do-mi-nus De-us Sa-ba - oth.

Piano
 $\text{♩} = 60$
pp *p*

S
mf Ple - ni sunt cae - li et ter - ra glo-ri-a tu - a Ho - san - na in ex - cel - sis

A
mf Ple - ni sunt cae - li et ter - ra glo-ri-a tu - a Ho - san - na in ex - cel - sis. *div.*

T
mf Ple - ni sunt cae - li et ter - ra glo-ri-a tu - a Ho - san - na in ex - cel - sis. *div.*

B
mf Ple - ni sunt cae - li et ter - ra glo-ri-a tu - a Ho - san - na in ex - cel - sis. *div.*

Pno.
mf *f* *ff*

8 12

cresc. 3 *f* *ff*

2 Missa Brevis: Part 2. Sanctus, Benedictus, Agnus Dei

Benedictus

S *mf* unis. Be-ne-dic - tus qui ve - nit in no-mi-ne Do - mi - ni

A *mf* unis. Be-ne-dic - tus qui ve - nit in no-mi-ne Do - mi - ni

T *mf* unis. Be-ne-dic - tus qui ve - nit in no-mi-ne Do - mi - ni

B *mf* unis. Be-ne-dic - tus qui ve - nit in no-mi-ne Do - mi - ni.

Pno. *mf* *mp* *f*

S *ff* *div.* *unis.* *div.* *unis.* Ho-san-na, Ho-san-na, Ho-san-na, Ho -

A *ff* *div.* *unis.* *div.* *unis.* Ho-san-na, Ho-san-na, Ho-san-na, Ho

T *ff* *div.* *unis.* *div.* *unis.* Ho-san-na, Ho-san-na, Ho-san-na, Ho

B *ff* *div.* *unis.* *div.* *unis.* Ho-san-na, Ho-san-na, Ho-san-na, Ho -

Pno. *ff*

Missa Brevis: Part 2 Sanctus, Benedictus, Agnus Dei

3

23 24

S san - na, Ho - san - na in ex - cel - sis.

A san - na Ho - san - na in ex - cel - sis.

T 8 san - na Ho - san - na in ex - cel sis

B san - na, Ho - san - na in ex - cel - sis

Pno. 23 24 7

26 28 32 rit.

S

A

T 8

B

Pno. 26 28 32 dim. mp p rit.

4 "Agnus Dei" *dolce a tempo* Missa Brevis: Part 2 Sanctus, Benedictus, Agnus Dei

33 *p* ("straight" tone) 36 *mf* 40 *p*

S A - gnus De - i qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di: A - gnus

A A - gnus De - i qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di: A - gnus

T 8 *mp* (can't "straight" tone) mi - se - re - re no - bis

B *mp* mi - se - re - re no - bis.

33 *a tempo* 36 40

Pno. *pp* *mp* *pp* *pp*

41 *mp* 44 *pp*

S De - i, qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di: A - gnus De - i, qui

A De - i, qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di: A - gnus De - i, qui

T 8 *p* Mi - se - re - re no - bis

B *p* Mi - se - re - re no - bis

41 44

Pno. *mp* *pp*

Missa Brevis: Part 2 Sanctus, Benedictus, Agnus Dei

48 *p* *div.* 52 *pp* *stagger breathing* *ppp* 5

S tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di do - na no - bis pa - cem *pp* *ppp*

A tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di do - na no - bis pa - cem. *pp* *ppp*

T *div.* *p* *rit.* *pp* *ppp*

B *p* *rit.* *pp* *ppp*

do - na no - bis pa - cem.

do - na no - bis pa - cem.

Pno. 48 52 *rit.* *pp*

rit.

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